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MATURE REFLECTIONS

AND

DEVOTIONS

OF THE

REV. ROWLAND HILL, A.M.

IN HIS OLD AGE.

BY THE

REV. EDWIN SIDNEY, A.M.

AUTHOR OF HIS LIFE.

But here we trace indelibly defined,
All his admirers' fondest hopes could crave,
Shrewdness of intellect, and strength of mind,
Devout, yet lively, and acute, though grave.

BERNARD BARTON.

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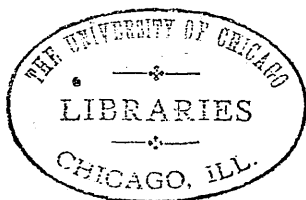
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NOTICE.

It gives me pleasure to acknowledge the friendly contributions I have received towards the completion of my long promised little volume. My thanks are due to the Rev. Dr. Collyer, of Peckham, who sent me the beautiful reflection in page 88; to J. Dalton, Esq., of the Priory, in the same place; and to Messrs. Machon, Tyler, Bland, and Goring, attendants at Surry Chapel, who had treasured up some of the choice observations of its venerable minister. The notes, however, of these respectable and obliging individuals, were small in comparison of the voluminous manuscripts of Mr. Brookman of West Square, who for some years was in the constant habit of taking in short-hand the prayers and discourses of Mr. Rowland Hill. He has preserved much that would otherwise have been lost, and readily favoured me with the use of his papers, that I might select from them any thoughts or devotions which I should think useful for my proposed compilation. Out of these materials, and my own resources, I have formed the collection now presented to the public, which I have endeavoured to edit in the way I conceived most conducive to the reputation of my beloved rela-

tive and the edification of my readers. The prayers furnished by Mr. Brookman were very numerous; I have however given only a few of them entire, preferring to select parts illustrative of some of the leading subjects of Mr. Hill's devotions, which I have prefixed to them as titles. I have revised and arranged for publication both these and the reflections, in the manner I conceived most congenial to the mind of their author; and if in some parts there may appear a lack of editorial neatness, it will be pardoned, in consideration of my desire to preserve as much as possible, the powerful though sometimes peculiar phraseology of my revered relation. The encouraging reception given to my *Life of my beloved guardian*, makes me venture to apply to this memorial of his piety and devotion, the quaint, but expressive lines of his favourite John Bunyan, prefixed to the second part of the *Pilgrim's Progress*:

"Wherefore my *second part*, thou need'st not be
Afraid to shew thy head: none can hurt thee,
That wish but well to him that went before:
'Cause thou com'st after with a second store
Of things as good, as rich, as profitable
For young or old, for stagg'ring and for stable."

Acle, near Norwich,
February 29th, 1836.

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INTRODUCTION.

I HAVE heard Mr. Rowland Hill remark, with his characteristic humility, that, while the minds of many old men seemed to him like ample store-rooms, filled with a rich variety of materials, he could compare his own only to a closet, containing a few good thoughts, to be produced as occasion required. Though this estimate of his attainments fell much below their real extent and solidity, yet it is certain that the perpetual activity of his life prevented him from acquiring more than a limited quantity of such information, as can be treasured up by those alone who are devoted to the pursuits of literature. Practical wisdom is, however, often in an inverse proportion to knowledge derived from books; and, as in philosophy, so in theology, we need both the erudite student and the acute observer. For more than seventy years had Mr. Hill been conversant with the most interesting of all subjects which can attract the attention of human intelligence, namely, the working of that supernatural power upon the soul, which is to restore in it the lost image of a holy God. He had accurately noted the different effects of religion upon the heart, whether pretended, imaginary, or real; and had so matured his views, that they assumed, without apparent effort, the forms of maxims applicable to almost all the va-

rious cases which came successively before him. It was from these experimental observations, that his sermons and religious conversation derived their attraction and influence; for though defective in argumentative plan and systematic arrangement, they possessed the brightness and force of practical wisdom. Great weight was also given to his opinions, from the striking fact, that the fundamentals of truth remained essentially the same in his breast from his earliest youth to hoary hairs. All the conflicting scenes through which he passed had never shaken his doctrines; they stood proof against worldly persecution, enthusiastic heat, and frigid profession. He was guided and preserved in the way of life by the voice of revelation, the dictates of conscience, and the spirit of prayer. He watched the progress of religion in his own mind, and keenly noticed it in others. His great study was religion in the soul. For this he was singularly fitted by two remarkable qualities—simplicity and purity. His judgment was neither fettered by prejudice, nor obscured by personal inconsistency. He saw through the medium of no party; he indulged in no practice that could lead him to a false estimate of kindred error in the conduct of other Christians. More than common acquaintance with divine things only seemed to increase his docility of spirit; so that just before the close of his long career, he was heard to say with affecting emphasis, “the farther I get from human childhood, the more I desire to get into divine childhood, and to die a little child in my old age.” When he reviewed the scenes of

his protracted pilgrimage, he could not revert in recollection to the spot in which he had dishonoured the holy way; and he was enabled to remark, with humble thankfulness to the power by which he had been upheld, "nothing is more encouraging to God's people, than when an aged pilgrim sets a good example to the last; I think I would rather die a thousand deaths, than live to disgrace my Master's cause in the last stage of my life." He united to the keenness of an eagle's eye, and the lofty steadiness of an eagle's flight above the world, the harmless appetite and gentle disposition of a dove. Hence arose the authority of his precepts and the piety of his devotions, specimens of which I have endeavoured to arrange as systematically as possible in the present little volume. In writing the life of my revered relation, I felt it my duty to portray his character with a fidelity which forbade me to omit any essential part of its outline for the sake of producing an *ideal* untrue to nature. I had to exhibit the *man* as well as the *Christian* and the *minister*—to represent the effects, not only of the lights of religion, but of the shadows of human imperfection; and by so doing, I fulfilled his honest wish, that no biographer might ever disgrace his name with the false gloss of posthumous adulation. I have now a very different task; my purpose is to record his mature opinions on questions of infinite importance, and to give examples of his prayers as he approached the period of their exchange for an everlasting song of praise. However great a man's talents, however exalted his pursuits, the

proverb is still true, *malè vivitur, si de Deo non benè creditur*;* and though the research which traces the hand of the Supreme Being in heavenly arrangements and earthly adaptions is worthy of high admiration, it must yield in value and importance to the wisdom from above which leads to a knowledge of that *new creation*† in the soul, which is emphatically designated as “God’s workmanship.” The philosophy also of the human mind is not to be considered of little value, but the great error of many wise men has been, that they have overlooked the wondrous change which is effected in it by vital religion. The Reflections in these pages bear on this transcendent subject, and are the result of an enlightened acquaintance with those two essential points of Christian inquiry—the state of the heart by nature, and its condition when recovered by grace. There is scarcely a thought in the entire book, which was not conceived when its author was past seventy years of age, and much of their value consists in the ripeness of Christian experience that produced them. The reports of Mr. Hill’s views on some important points of doctrine having been various and discordant, I feel it due to him to give in this place, a brief account of his opinions on certain leading topics of his ministry, by which I shall both vindicate his character as a theologian, and enable the reader duly to appreciate several striking observations in the following pages.

* He leads an ill life, who has no true faith in his God.

† *καὶνὴ κτίσις.*

The good old divines frequently reduced the sum and substance of religion to the three heads—*credenda*, things to be believed—*agenda*, things to be done—*speranda*, things to be hoped for. My present object is to describe important articles of the belief, as well as the pious deportment and chastened hopes of the declining days of my venerable friend.

The first great question of faith, and which indeed employs every believer's mind to the last, is "who made *me* to differ?—how came *I* to be rescued from the thralldom of sin, and brought into the glorious liberty of the gospel of Christ?" In other words, "how came I to be *chosen* of God?" As the preaching of Mr. Rowland Hill on the subject of *Election* has been much misrepresented, I will now proceed to give his exact view of this doctrine when he had passed his eightieth year. It was ever his plan to represent the Scriptures as declaring the foreknowledge of God, and yet treating man as a free agent. He regarded the doctrine of election as one "to be considered with great solemnity, and reverential fear." "It is impossible," he said in a sermon on 2 Peter i. 10, 11, "to deny the foreknowledge of God; he certainly sees all things as they are to be, and yet, *though this foreknowledge exists in him, it is not a rule for us.* We are not to go *by that which God knows will be*, but *by his revealed word as it is now before us.*" His opinion on the entire subject may be reduced to the following points, which I shall give as nearly as possible in his language, with my own arrangement.

1. It is certain that God must foresee the ultimate end of every creature he has made.

2. But, it is not for us to inquire into his *secret decrees*; we have only practically to do with his *general promises*.

3. Yet I certainly know that there is that in my heart, which would have disinclined me to make God the subject of my thoughts, unless he had made me the object of his choice.

4. But I find that these two declarations are equally true, "no man can come unto me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him,"—and "*whosoever* cometh [this is a word as *universal* as a word can be] I will in no wise cast out." I would not ask therefore whether *I am the choice of God*, but I would look within and see whether *God is become the choice of my regenerated heart*.

5. I feel I cannot give myself grace, but if grace is offered me to come, then I ought to come, and obey the dictates of the Holy Spirit who so sweetly invites.

6. To those who say they cannot give themselves grace and therefore cannot come, I say—"pray, why do you cry that you cannot give yourselves grace? Did you ever ask for it? If not, how can you say whether it would be given or not?"

7. The wickedness and perverseness *of our own will*, is the *only thing* which keeps us from Christ.

8. Though there is an awful day coming, there will never be a day in which it may be said by any one, I *would* have come to Christ, but he *would not let me come*."

9. We are commanded to make our calling and

election sure." Some say, "it is sure to the elect." But I have before said, the purpose of God is not to be the rule of our conduct. All we want is the evidence of our election made sure to our own minds. Now, if I have heartfelt sorrow for sin, if I struggle to be delivered from it, if I am animated with St. Paul's energetic spirit and cry out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death;" if I "groan being burdened," whence could these feelings come? Only from the Spirit who convinces me of sin, whereby I know its load and groan under it. And if the Spirit of Christ is in me, whence came that Spirit? Certainly from God himself. I judge that it is the Spirit of Christ within me, if it leads me to him, so that I have "Christ within me," as it is said, "the hope of glory." But still I need other evidence. I not only want conviction of sin, and faith to lead me, a poor dependent sinner, to make Christ my all in all to salvation, but I desire to recognize the softening, purifying, regenerating, comforting influences of divine grace, that I may see clearly, I am not the man I was in the days of my unbelief. Now I trust I have that faith revealed to my mind, which purifies me and makes me a "new creature" in Christ Jesus. I have "purified my soul," not of myself, but by "obeying the truth;" and I obey the truth "through the Spirit." Love also comes into my heart, which I am enabled to manifest to mankind. Thus I judge, in a measure, that I am numbered with the righteous, by my righteous fruit. Am I proud of this, as though it was my own? No

more than St. Paul was, when he said, "by the grace of God I am what I am." If I have any thing good, it is the Lord's free, unmerited gift, and I praise him for it, and him alone. This is what the bible says, "by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."

10. I firmly believe that God would never have given me all these evidences, if he had not ordained me unto everlasting life of his free grace and mercy.

Not one bright crown is worn above,
But what is owned the gift of love.

Such were Mr. Rowland Hill's views with regard to a subject, on which his doctrines have been often very unfairly stated. While he was careful in no wise to derogate from the divine sovereignty, he was decided in his declarations as to human responsibility. He did not cavil at revealed truths because they were above his reason, but considered that a great deal of our moral probation consists in our willingness to receive every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord. Human faculties cannot measure that wondrous chain of mysterious dependencies, the last link of which is attached to the hidden foot-stool of the eternal throne; and they will ever be misled, who draw hasty conclusions from such partial *data* as are now presented to our limited comprehensions.*

* The remark of Galileo, made in reference to the difficulties which encompass us in contemplating nature with the eye of philosophy, applies equally to those which meet us at every turn in the path of theological investigation. His words are "we recognise, and admire the greatness of God the more in proportion as we find ourselves the less able to penetrate the profound abysses of his wisdom."

A law of nature is a generalization from all the observations within our reach ; but we can arrive at no law by which the decrees of infinite intelligence are guided, until all the facts connected with them, are before our eyes ; and these were never intended to be fully opened to the research of man during his sojourn in time—they will be unfolded to our expanded and admiring minds in a world of light. It doubtless depends upon the will of the Creator that each individual is *naturally* what he is—that he is a man and not an inferior animal ; and who can dare to say in the very face of Scripture, that it is not from the same cause, that the believer is *supernaturally* the child, not of earth, but of heaven ! But we cannot mistake the mind of God in the plain gospel declaration that he is infinite in mercy, and “*will* have all men to be saved.” Because we cannot comprehend the connections of things contingent, shall we therefore acquiesce in a Jesuitical *scientia media*, and conclude that they are not determined by the divine will ? Nay, rather let us remember the express assurance of the Lord, that he “orders all things according to the counsel of his own will ;” bearing in mind at the same time, that God’s decree is not the rule of human practice ; that man is accountable for his faith and his actions, and that “every mouth will be stopped, and all the world become guilty,” before the judgment seat of Christ.

Careful as Mr. Rowland Hill was to state his doctrinal theories, so as to guard against those awful shipwrecks of faith, in which too many have been involved from rashly braving the agitated

gulfs of mystery, he was not less anxious to avoid all wrong practical inferences. On one occasion, a man whose life was not in accordance with his *high* professions, told him that, notwithstanding a few errors, he was convinced, *from what he had felt within*, that he ought not to have any doubts of his ultimate safety. Mr. Hill immediately exclaimed, "no doubts indeed!—then let me say, you must allow me to have some for you." Another time, a person whose conduct by no means adorned the doctrine of holiness, said to him he was sure he was *called*. "*Called!*" was his reply, "to what?—the Christian is not called to uncleanness but unto holiness." Like every other minister, he had to lament over some inconsistent hearers, and he used to remark even publicly, "I wish I could render my inconsistent hearers invisible when they go in and out of the chapel, for the world must observe the discredit they bring upon our cause." When speaking on the doctrine of final perseverance, he constantly observed with great emphasis, I have no notion of any hope of *perseverance*, but what is grounded on *persevering*.

The next topic on which I am desirous to give an outline of Mr. Hill's opinions, is that of *the law*, and its relation to believers. His views may, I think, be comprised under the following heads. He taught,

1. The eternal, unchangeable nature of the law's demands upon the obedience of man. God alters not his own law; it is now as it was when given to man in Paradise. There is no such thing as a *remedial* law.

2. Man's inability to give that perfect obedience the law requires for his justification.

3. That Christ as our surety magnified the law and made it honourable by his *obediēce*; and by his *sufferings* bore the penalty justice required for its transgression.

4. That the obedience and sufferings of Christ as our surety, have constituted him "the Lord our righteousness;" and this righteousness being imputed to believers, God is still "just, yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

5. That the only true evidence of a Christian's acquittal from the condemnation of the law, through the justifying righteousness of Christ, is the communication of his Spirit's holiness, whereby he is made to love the very law from whose curse he is delivered, delighting in it in his inner man, and feeling with the psalmist, "Lord, how I love thy law."

6. That faith, through which we are justified, is neither the "matter nor meritorious cause of our justification,"* but the instrument by which it is conveyed to us, and that the proof of its genuineness is that it "works by love," making the law, which is fulfilled in the word *love*, the rule of a holy and devoted life.

This summary of what I conceive to have been Mr. Hill's doctrines on the law and our relation to it, will tend to illustrate the Reflections on these

* This quotation is from "Beart's Vindication of the Eternal Law and Everlasting Gospel"—a book Mr. Hill often recommended to me as containing, upon the whole, very clear views of the nature of the law, the suretyship of Christ, and the faith through which we are justified.

points, which are to be found in the body of the volume, and will moreover I trust relieve his memory from the slightest suspicion of the tendency to *antinomianism*, at one time so inconsiderately and unjustly imputed to him. Unquestionably, an infinitely wise and holy God cannot be supposed to change the commandments he once gave as a transcript of his own mind ; nor can we imagine him offering a law of lower terms suited to human imperfection. No, all things created may pass away, but “not one jot or tittle of the law shall pass away till all be fulfilled ;” it is as unalterable as the perfect, changeless God who dictated it, and has the same demands now on the believing saint, and the unbelieving sinner too, that it had on sinless Adam in his paradisaical condition. It is in adapting the plan of salvation to these eternal obligations of the law, that the wisdom of God is so wonderfully manifested. When man first sinned by invading the emblem of his obedience, it was a mystery unfathomable even by angels, how the infinite justice which necessarily condemned him, and the infinite mercy which required his deliverance could be reconciled. A collision between two infinite attributes of Deity seemed at hand, and well might appalled seraphs suspend their songs, and heaven be wrapt in sudden silence ; but, behold, in the person of the Redeemer justice is satisfied, and mercy glorified, and thus “mercy and truth [or unalterable justice] have met together ; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.”* Christ’s atonement which has satisfied unbending justice,

* Ps. lxxxv. 10.

and his perfect obedience which gave honour and lustre to an insulted law, are accepted for believers, whose only evidence of an availing interest in his suretyship, is that they have the commandments engraven by the Holy Spirit on their hearts, whereby they delight in them as the whole will of God and the whole duty of man. I remember well when I entered on the duties of the ministry, how strongly Mr. Hill urged me to begin with declaring the law, as the first step towards leading sinners to that Saviour who is made "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."*

Such views as these naturally lead to those clear statements of the inseparable union of justification and sanctification, which were so prominent in the sermons of Mr. Rowland Hill. He always warned his hearers, that "those only can be freed from the guilt of sin by the atonement of Christ, who are delivered from the pollution of sin by the spirit of Christ." Were it otherwise, the second Adam would not restore what the first Adam lost, nor fulfil the types of the Old Testament, wherein we see united to every sacrifice an ablution, to every altar a laver. "It is," said Mr. Hill, in one of his moments of energy, "the worst antinomianism that can disgrace the Christian character, to suppose that we were redeemed for any other purpose, than that our blood-bought souls might be fitted for the service of God by his Holy Spirit." We have a fine emblem of this, in the blood and water which flowed from the

* Rom. x. 4.

pierced side of the dying Saviour ; the blood to atone, the water to cleanse—and the only evidence of our interest in the atonement of the blood, is our being washed in the water.

Mr. Hill felt this so strongly, that as he advanced in years, holiness became more and more the constant theme of his discourses. His conceptions of the infinite holiness of God were sublime almost beyond imagination, and he never failed to make a right practical use of such inspiring contemplations. What the essential holiness of the Divine Being is, we cannot comprehend ; the eye is soon dazzled by such immensity of glory ; but we can view it through the softening medium of the gospel, which so subdues its unapproachable brightness that we may contemplate it with serene delight. What then is revealed of it in the word of life, and how is it represented to us ? We are taught that it is a perfect absence of the slightest speck of impurity—an infinite contrariety to the minutest sin—that it is the cause of God's making *himself* the great end of all his works, because being infinitely holy, he is the only perfect good that never can be lessened or increased. But the holiness which is essential and original in God, is a communicated quality to all believers, who are to be "holy even as he is holy," since all that relates to him must necessarily be so :—his dwelling place in heaven, his sanctuary on earth, his attendants above, his saints below, must all be holy. It is herein that our likeness to the Lord consists ; and so deeply impressed was my pious relative with

this truth, that he frequently exclaimed "what is salvation?—holiness in time, and perfection in eternity."

While Mr. Hill thus dwelt upon the subject of personal holiness, he always taught that the bible describes it as a quality belonging only to the *converted*, whence he concluded that if holiness is essential, *conversion* must be so likewise. Even the heathen philosophers* could discover that *some change* in man's present condition was indispensable, before he could be fitted for the service and presence of his Maker; but the true *nature, cause, and effects* of this change, they were unable to define, though convinced of its *necessity*. In making known therefore the character of the requisite alteration in the mind of man, revelation accords with sound reason and reflection; it has moreover spared no similitude by which it might convey to us a true notion of that new creation, which, to use a beautiful expression of Mr. Hill, "changes the texture of the human soul, and makes it the very reverse of what it once was." Our affections are naturally so perverted, that they are centred in the creature, in self, and in sin; therefore the design of conversion is to *turn* us from the creature to God, from self to Christ, sin to holiness, whereby we may enjoy sure repose, certain hope, and real happiness. Not only the *future* prospects, but the

* Plato makes Socrates say that it is impossible to rid the world entirely of evil (οὐκ ἀπολέσθαι τὰ κακὰ δυνατόν) and that we only escape from its contagion by being brought into a degree of resemblance and conformity to the Deity.

present duties and privileges set before us by christianity, are all contrary to the evident propensities of fallen human beings; they must therefore be changed before we can obey, enjoy, or anticipate according to the directions of the word of God. The truth of this was so evident to the enlightened mind of my aged friend, that he declared it as his opinion, "that all the precious blood of the covenant, and all that our Saviour has done for us, will never be efficacious, unless we are made new creatures." "Two things," he used to say, "I thank my God for—the land in which I was born, but ten thousand times more, for the day in which I was born again. O what an expression, *born again*!—in this second birth I became a new creature in Christ Jesus. What cold language would it be, if we were to say, in allusion to St. Paul's conversion, '*after this revelation he changed his religion*;' no, no, *he met with a religion that changed him*." When speaking of this work of God the Holy Spirit, he would constantly advert to one great proof of its being the effect of such a cause, namely, the manifest elevation it communicates to the mind, expanding and ennobling even the most untutored faculties of man. It is the standing miracle,* which has never been withdrawn from the church of Christ, and a wilful blindness to this glorious evidence of the Saviour's presence by his Spirit in the midst of her, will probably form part of the condemnation of those who "have eyes and see

* Mr. Hill once said, 'There is no evidence of the truth of religion like that of regeneration in those who are born of God.'

not." "What sort of a power," Mr. Hill would often ask, "must that be which makes a man differ from his former self, as much as light does from darkness?"—and again, "have we not reason to expect to be so transformed; for since God changes not, as to his own infinitely holy nature, must he not necessarily alter ours, before we can be united to him?" At the same time that he was most decided as to the necessity of regeneration, before we can be truly said to be Christians, he was far from adopting any thing like an enthusiastic view of the subject, always deprecating fanatic representations of the mighty work of God the Holy Spirit in our souls, which he described as commencing with the illumination of the understanding,* and ending with the subjugation of the will and affections, so as to bring them to centre in the will of God, and to delight simply in divine things, from a new perception and choice of their loveliness and beauty. His favourite illustration was from those insect metamorphoses which abound in nature. The butterfly, seemingly made on purpose to exhibit the magic hues of the radiant light the sun sheds upon its downy wings, was once a loathsome caterpillar crawling on the surface of the soil, and alike uninviting in its food and its appearance. Now all is changed; the eye dwells with pleasure on its loveliness, and marks how it sucks the choicest sweets from the flowers

* He used to observe, "A man's glory is his understanding, and when it is well directed, it will direct him well. Hence, the great work of God is to deal with the understanding, that the understanding may deal with the other faculties, and they may all be brought under divine obedience."

over which it hovers in its beauteous flight. Thus the Christian was once a sinner, grovelling amidst the things of earth, and rejoicing in the paltry gratification of the pleasures of iniquity—but grace has manifested its power; he has passed through a wondrous transformation; he shines to the praise of his Redeemer, and feeds with delight on the “bread of life sent down from heaven.” By an image like that I have more than once heard my venerable friend describe the wondrous effects of true regeneration on the mind of man, and which must indeed take place in every human being—he *must be born again*—before he can enter into the kingdom of heaven; that is, before he can be fitted for his state of duty and privilege here and glory hereafter. Regeneration is the *earnest* of good things to come; and under this impression Mr. Hill once remarked, “if I have the image of God in time, I have a certain evidence, better than if an angel spoke to me, that I shall be with him to all eternity;” and again, “there is nothing but the proof and experience of regeneration, which can truly nullify the wretched principles of infidelity.” He also said, “I should never desire to preach again upon the great work Christ has wrought out *for us*, unless I might connect it with the great work his Holy Spirit is to accomplish *in us*.”

Having now given what I believe to be a correct view of the opinions of Mr. Rowland Hill on certain essential points of doctrine, I shall briefly describe his deportment and expectations at that solemn period, when, to use his own expression,

“he was daily looking for his breaking up day.” Though still retaining some of those peculiarities which were inherent in his very nature, the general characteristics of the last stage of his pilgrimage were humility, solemnity and love, exhibited with a brightness which bespoke preparation for a world of glory. One of his constant themes, as I have observed before, was the holiness of the Deity, and the use he made of his contemplation of this ineffable excellency of God, was to remind himself of the faint restoration of the divine image hitherto accomplished in his soul, and to cast himself in the dust before the Lord. The increasing illumination of his mind served only to discover to him the height of the standard, and the lowness of his attainments, which led him to remark, he who thinks himself come to perfection is a fool, but he who does not aim at it, is a greater.”

Nothing was more remarkable in my aged relative, than the solemnity of spirit he so often manifested in his declining days, both in conversation and the pulpit. On Sunday evening, Dec. 28, 1828, he spoke to the following effect to his hearers in London:—“ Though my thoughts may be common thoughts, they are still solemn thoughts. Here I am—I have lived far beyond the time I expected to live, but the age to which I have advanced convinces me that I cannot be long with you ; I must soon depart into the world of spirits. O, my God, how is it with my soul? Shall I not seriously examine myself, whether I am fit to go out of the body, that when I die I may be ever with the Lord? Does it not become me, as your minister, to ask

you, and does it not become me to ask myself, whether I have been faithful to your immortal, precious souls—whether any of you can lay the charge of your blood at my door? Let me ask myself before God whether I can say, as Paul did to the church and elders of Ephesus, ‘I take you to record this day that I am clear from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God.’ This I certainly have attempted, and shall be glad to know what you think of this matter. If it should be your unhappy lot to lose your lives before your souls are sanctified by the Spirit, will your ruin be your fault or mine? Where will be the blame? Have I warned you faithfully or not? Tell me—I will try the question again—have I declared the whole counsel of God? Tell me whether, in deed and in truth, I have told you again and again what dreadful blame you are under as sinners—what awful vengeance hangs over your guilty heads—what misery must follow the sentence of that dreadful judgment, which is stated in language so solemn as this, ‘the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men?’” After some other observations, he added, “O that I had all the ministers now in London before me, that I might tell every one of them the importance of their work, and the value of the trust committed to them. Pray for your minister, that he may be more faithful to you, and that you may be more faithful to yourselves.”

His solemn earnestness increased to the very conclusion of his ministry. In the last sermon he

ever preached (March 31, 1833) I find this touching passage, "I cannot speak much this morning: may God speak to your hearts, to such as have been despising Christ and his gospel till now. You are not farther off from God than Saul of Tarsus was; you are not farther off from God than I was when I first went to Eton School. There never was a sinner fonder of this world, or farther from the fear of God than I was then; but God made me wise by his own power. You are not farther off from God than the penitent thief was who hung with our blessed Lord upon the cross; but when in penitential language he cried out, 'Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom,' it was immediately replied to him, 'to-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.' He was a sinner upon the cross one moment, and a glorified saint in heaven the next! How do I know but that while I am now speaking in weakness, my dear Redeemer is giving that supernatural strength to some poor sinners here, whereby they will be converted unto God and brought near to him. Perhaps some may go home and tell their friends, as I have mentioned before now, of two brothers having come to this chapel when very wicked persons, (I know one of them now,) and how one of them was convinced, and went home and said to his brother, 'O do come and hear, it may be you will hear something that will do you good, as it has done me.' He came, and heard, and the other said to me, 'O, sir, no language can describe what I felt when I looked upon my dear brother's face and saw the penitential tear trickling from his eyes.' Sinner, may the

penitential tear now trickle from thine eye, and may the Lord grant thee such contrition of spirit as will not suffer it to be wiped away, till sin is removed from its seat in thy mind." Such were his earnest appeals to sinners when he stood upon the threshold of eternity, and the same seriousness that marked his discourses was frequently prominent in his conversation.

But that which most clearly bespoke his ripeness for heaven, was the truest spirit of love—love supreme towards a God of love, and charity towards all men. "I never can love God," he used to say, "till I am acquainted with the loveliness of God in Christ;" and this was his constant and favourite theme. He was much applied to by ladies who desired his autograph, to write in their albums, and he composed the following lines in 1831, on his favourite subject, for that purpose:—

"GOD IS LOVE."

Who can deny that God is love,
When God the Saviour from above,
Came down to shed his vital blood
To bring such rebels near to God?

What a stupendous act of grace,
That Christ should take the sinner's place;
O chant aloud, with high surprise,
"That we might live, the Saviour dies."

But still he lives, e'en yet to prove
He sways the sceptre of his love,
While here on earth he reigns within,
Cleanses vile hearts and keeps them clean.

Lord, shed abroad that love of thine,
Which bids the sons of darkness shine,
Adorned with a celestial dress,
The splendid robe of righteousness.

Let wond'ring angels join the song
To whom immortal notes belong ;
Let all on earth, and all above,
Conspire to sing that *God is love*.

He however gave better proof of "the love God shed abroad in his heart," than could be evidenced merely by a few pious verses, in the practical view which he took of the nature of Christian charity. All past bitterness in controversy was deeply lamented by him, and never even referred to but reluctance ; and he looked upon every man as his brother in Christ Jesus, whom he believed to be born of the Spirit, and devoted to truth. "The most truly influential thing in the world," he said, "is love, kindled of God, and fanned into exercise by wisdom from above." He thus beautifully illustrated the excellence of loving God supremely—"What excites love ? It is life. I may be pleased with a fine picture, I may admire a beautiful piece of machinery, but I cannot *love* them ; my affections can only be attracted towards things that are animate. Where also the capacities of the living being are more limited, as in the inferior animals, I cannot feel the same degree of regard I experience towards man. My affection rises with the superiority of the living object to which it is directed. Hence I see the vast wisdom of the first great command, 'thou shalt love the Lord thy God'—a being of infinite knowledge, power, mercy, love, and holiness—with *all* thy heart."

This supreme love to God is the true secret of unity in the Christian church ; but it does not abound as it ought, because of the prevalence of

human selfishness even in things pertaining to godliness. There is much worthy of attention in this pithy remark of Mr. Rowland Hill—"when the Lord put the different animals into the ark, lions, tigers, lambs, all agreed with each other. If we are really *in the ark*, we shall also be blest with a spirit of concord." Another of his observations was, "if one heaven is to contain us all *hereafter*, may we have a little more of that heaven *now*, by being more united among ourselves." "People," he also said, "dwell too much upon the fringes and phylacteries of religion, instead of laying due stress upon religion itself, and this is one reason why we do not agree as we ought." These happy principles he truly carried into practice as he drew near the termination of his long career; and when the snows of almost ninety years rested on his head, they could not chill a bosom that was wrapped in the mantle of peace and love.

It now only remains for me to notice the expectations of this eminent servant of God, when awaiting the solemn moment in which he was to make proof of his professions and his hopes. Thus the reader will be prepared for those sublime reflections on death which are to be found in these pages. While his trust in the faithfulness of a covenant God in Jesus was unmoved, sometimes a degree of diffidence arose in his mind, from a sense of the weakness of his own powers; but it always ended in leading him to feel that Christ was indeed, in the fullest acceptation of the expression, his *All*. "There is nothing," he sometimes observed, "which so sweetly mingles with confi-

dence as the grace of diffidence." He felt that faith in the Saviour is compatible with what every one must experience who has any knowledge of the human heart—distrust of self. His illustration of this state of mind was original and eminently striking. He compared himself to the unfledged bird seated on a rock, and knowing that the abyss beneath him must be crossed ere he can reach the opposite shore, but shuddering while conscious of the weakness of his wings. "Thus," said he, "I tremble while I sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and look towards the other world; but yet I believe God will not let me be launched forth into eternity, till he has given me wings that will enable me to reach the promised rest; or if not, he will bear me in his arms."

I have already in my life of Mr. Hill sufficiently described his conduct in the chamber of death, when he felt that in a few short hours he should no longer be a sojourner in this probationary abode of the mysterious creature man. My desire now is merely to remark that the leading features of his state of mind were such as alone can be conceived to be based on a secure foundation—confidence in Christ and diffidence in self. He that is in any other frame, can have no true security; for it is when we are thus "*weak*" in our own estimation, that we may be said to be "strong in the Lord."

The views of this truly great man have not, I think, been fully appreciated, and perhaps one cause of this was that persons who knew him superficially, were led by his eccentricities to overlook the solid

parts of his character.* In many points of view he was decidedly before his age, particularly as to his notions of the practical effect of religion on the social system, and the faculties of the human mind. He saw clearly the imperfection of the present state of the Christian world, and his plans of action were much more adapted to what it ought to be than what it really is ; and hence arose their impracticability. His ideas of truth were too sober for the enthusiast, too spiritual for the mere moralist, too enlarged for the bigot, too fervent for the lukewarm, too disinterested for the aspiring—and of such is not what men call Christian society, with some happy exceptions, most unfortunately composed ? We look, however, for the completion of the Lord's well-proportioned temple, and hope ere long to witness the glorious arrangement of the now confused materials preparing for the Christian sanctuary. Thanks be to God, the eye rests not on decaying arches and tottering columns, which indicate a sanctuary fallen, but beholds only the unpolished stones which are preparing for a building yet to rise in majesty and beauty.

I may also remark that Mr. Rowland Hill estimated more clearly than most men, how far we are permitted to “see through the glass darkly,” and where the conditions of our present being have placed an impassable barrier to that higher knowledge for which we must be content to wait in this

* In the course of last summer, the son of an excellent prelate, distinguished alike for his piety and attainments, told me that his father had read my life of Rowland Hill, and observed how much he had undervalued him, and his views of truth.

probationary state, till introduced, with expanded powers of comprehension, and probably new faculties, to a brighter scene above. He knew that religion teaches us *more*, because it gives us "an understanding," than cold philosophy has believed, and *less* than wild enthusiasm has vainly imagined, and foolishly distorted. He saw that while Christianity regenerates and expands the soul, it still treats it as confined within the limits, and acting through the mechanism of a material frame ; and that though it communicates a supernatural power to control this machine, so disordered by sin, it regulates its movements according to the directions of a *written word*, by which all our actions must be guided, and according to which they will be judged. Hence arose two important dispositions of his mind—a willingness to receive with humble adoration truths *above reason*—and a desire to act in things practical *according to reason* guided by illumination from above. Revelation has two objects with regard to man—his *wants* and his *probation* ; as to the former, its words are plain, but as respects the latter, they are characterized by that mysterious darkness which hides the face of Deity, teaching us to exclaim, "it is the glory of God to conceal a thing," for thus the precious trial of our faith is perfected.



REFLECTIONS.

SECTION I.

SIN.

WHILST Adam was in a state of innocence, God was his companion ; but, directly he fell, he dreaded the presence of him, in whose presence before he had delighted to dwell. This is the state of mind that universally prevails in all his fallen and apostate race ; they cannot bear to live near God. Children of darkness, they choose "darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil ;" and there is not a single sinner upon earth, but would find, if he would ask himself the question, that he hates prayer, because he hates to draw near to God.

If I were sure that there was no hell *for* sin, yet I feel such a hell *in* it, that I never could be at rest till freed from it.

God will do nothing by means of our corruptions. I have always thought it an injudicious remark, that sin may bring us good. It cannot. The Lord may *over-rule* any evil for good, but he never does good *by* it.

I do not like the doctrine, that God sees no sin in his people. His word says the very contrary—"I would that ye should be ashamed and confounded 'when I am pacified towards you.'"^{*} is the import of his messenger's language to pardoned Israel. Though it is certain that every soul who has fled to Christ is perfectly secured by his great salvation, yet this does not put us beyond being accountable creatures before him.

I do not want to know the filth of sin in the practice of sin; I only want to feel the filth of sin in the power of holiness. I heard of a sanctimonious professor who went to a horse-race. His minister remonstrated with him, and he said, he *only went to see the vanity of it*. The good man replied, "the Scripture says, 'turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity.'"

The very breath of an ungodly man is dan-

* Ezek. xvi. 63.

gerous; we cannot come near him without a risk of catching his disease. If we are so long in his company as may afford us an opportunity of doing him good, God be praised; but whilst we attempt to do him good, O let us take care he does us no harm.

We must have done with sin the very instant we have to do with the Saviour.

Whatever God does is right, and I would say on all occasions, "I will be dumb." Certainly, if it were consistent with the will of God to annihilate sin, he cannot want the power—but he does not. I would not ask him *why*? My business is to be thankful that there is a remedy provided for me, and that the invitation is universal to accept it; and I am to take care that the fault is not mine in rejecting the remedy.

Some say, by way of excuse, "we must all feel the remains of sin." True, but there is a great difference between treating its presence as that of an enemy and welcoming it as a guest.

I have said sometimes, there is damnation *for* our sins; I would rather say there is damnation *in* our sins.

Whilst I live in sin, God cannot live in me.

A man may even die as a martyr, and then die to be eternally ruined. The best martyrs are those who know what it is to have the martyrdom of sin take place in their hearts.

We have an awful enemy in Satan, but we have one still worse in our own sinful hearts. I defy the foe without, if I am not likely to be betrayed by the foe within.

O for a universal cry to be saved from sin, or we shall never cry aright to be saved from hell. May there be such an effectual quarrel between us and sin, that we might as soon reconcile our bodies to a burning flame, as reconcile our souls to sin.

If sin be infinitely odious in the sight of God it is as impossible for me to commit a *little* sin, as to commit a *little* murder, for the least sin is an infinite evil before an infinitely holy God.

A wicked man often *dreads* God, but he does not *fear* him. He fears hell, but he does not fear sin.

Though I find sin living in me, yet I trust it lives a dying and decaying life.

When the Spirit convinces us of sin, we feel as the man would feel who suddenly perceived himself to be covered from head to foot with pitch, and who would be uneasy till he could get rid of it. Thus we feel the evil of sin, and our whole care is to be cleansed from it.

I do think that many who pass for serious people in time, will be driven from Christ, in that awful day when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed. We may have a gilded profession. You may gild a decayed post; but, if you scratch it, its rottenness will soon appear.

There is not a faculty belonging to my natural constitution, which may not betray me into the enemy's hand.

It is not mere outward sin committed by me that I am accountable for; the sinfulness of my thoughts proves that there is a world of iniquity within to condemn me.

I remember when I was a boy at school, and

serious impressions as to sin first came into my mind, I was much harassed by these words—"the end of these things is death." My desire now is to awaken the careless so to feel sin as to cry out, "what shall we do to be saved?"

I once went to see a poor man who was wounded in the leg. He was in great pain for a while. At length the surgeon said, "Do you feel much pain now?" "No, I do not," was the reply. "Is your pain all gone?" he asked. "Yes, it is." The surgeon touched the wound, and inquired, "Did you feel that?" "No." "Then death has begun its work, and mortification will soon spread over the whole body." He touched the feet, they were already cold. This is the way sin stupifies dying sinners that they feel not.

My sins grieve me, but do not drive me to despair. On the other hand, I pray that a sense of Christ's atonement may not make me wanton; but that I may be ashamed that a pardoned rebel is not more given up to him.

The more I feel a proper sense of pardon, the greater will be my hatred to sin.

A parent does not hate his child because he is diseased. So if I be a child of God, my infirmities will not alter his love to me, though he will hate what is wrong in me ; while I shall love him the more ardently for this, as well as for his needful corrections.

We are not only wicked from the natural propensity of our hearts, but the natural propensity of our hearts is to be willingly what we are. The worst part of a wicked man is his wicked will.

It is giving up the heart to the wickedness of the will, that completes the destruction of the soul.

I shall never be in earnest against evil till I have what my God says I must have—an abhorrence of that which is evil.

May there be a holy enmity between me and sin, that I may be alive to a holy friendship between God and my soul.

Nothing can more completely evidence the fallen state of man, than the need of the agency

of power from above to raise us from the low, ruined, degraded condition of sin, into which we are all sunk, and in which we shall remain, but as divine grace accomplishes the glorious change.

When the reins are thrown upon the necks of our lusts, even refined and educated men become pests of society.

Shall I play with the serpent sin, under the idea that his sting has been taken away by Christ? God forbid.

I do not renounce sin only because I shall be damned if I continue in it, but because God the Holy Spirit has made me to hate it.

A man carries his own hell in his breast, while he carries there his own nature in all its native sinfulness.

No sin surpasses that of unbelief, which shuts out God from the soul, and despises him in all his attributes.

Those need not be afraid of hell hereafter who are afraid of sin here.

There is one sin that destroys its millions, namely, *levity*. Those who were invited to the marriage supper "made light of it."

Sin is the fuel of the fire of eternal wrath.

The greatest heresy that can deceive the human mind, is the heresy that makes a man believe he can meet with mercy while he lives in sin.

What are the creatures of this world in comparison of that Being who created and upholds all worlds! He created them by his wisdom, and supports them by his power. He is ever, and will be, and must be, for he cannot be otherwise, the "King of kings and Lord of lords." From the highest seraph to the minutest insect he regulates all. Shall I then, a little worm of the earth, pretend to be an independent rebel against him! O that the Lord would make me remember that my rebellion has in it these two great evils, blasphemy and folly. We say with the unbeliever, "tush, God careth not for it,"

and we say with the fool, in our hearts, "there is no God." How came this to pass? Why, man sinned, and being left to himself, apostatized from God. According to the dignity of the Divine Majesty, justice left the rebel to himself, and gave him over to his own devices, that he might try how far he could make himself happy without God. "The sinner has turned me off," said the Lord, "and therefore his mind shall be under his own control; he shall act according to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life—these shall be his curse. As he will not consult me, so he shall not be directed by me. I will leave him to creep upon the earth, and he shall act according to his own little narrow inclination. He shall be accursed with selfishness, the love of himself." Thus God leaves the impenitent to their fallen nature, and misery is the result. The most awful judgment God can inflict, is to leave sinful man to himself.

The world cannot produce an instance of misery, of which sin is not the parent.

The devil cares not how men serve him as long as they will serve him. He only wants to

have them in a chain, regarding not what chain it is.

I have often thought of what I once remember to have heard a pious female say in her dying moments—"thanks be to God, in a few hours more I shall be placed beyond the danger of ever again sinning against my Lord. I shall bid an eternal farewell to sin."

We have often alarum bells in our houses to warn us of the approach of the thief. We want them in our hearts, to warn us of the approach of sin.

The wilful sinner is a self-destroyer:—he thrusts the devil's sword into his own heart.

It is amazing how much we injure ourselves by not inquiring what is essentially wrong.

I should always remember that I am surrounded by a multitude of thieves, who want to rob me of my spiritual treasures, and that the enemy is ever watching to discover where the weak point is, that he may break in and seize upon my jewels.

We sometimes know that we are wrong, and yet do not feel the most distant inclination to be right.

—A child of God has a perpetual prayer-book in his heart, if he has a hatred to sin there, for that will always keep him praying against it in all its forms and degrees.

It is plain, that by nature we belong not to God, because we do not serve him with the things he has entrusted to us.

It will be a miracle of mercy if we get safely through our bodily desires and feelings.

Do we ever sufficiently agonize for the accomplishment of this one object—an abhorrence of evil? Let a man of the most powerful eloquence try to persuade us to take hold of a serpent or any other venomous creature; we should not do it, for we abhor them. So may we seek that God may bless us with such a holy antipathy to sin, that no power on earth may ever persuade us willingly to practise it.

It is Satan's greatest artifice to make a man

think lightly of sin, while the very first work of the Holy Spirit is to make him see it in its true colours.

Sin is Satan's anvil in the heart of the impenitent ; it feels nothing from unnumbered strokes.

The two great agents of Satan to lead sinful man to destruction, are Pride and Infidelity.

We are much more hurt by presumption than by fear. If any man is living in sin, he is guilty of the highest presumption to fancy he is one of the chosen of God ; called of God, yet not obeying the call ! While a man lives in sin we must consider him as an impenitent sinner.

A natural man desires carnal things as he does food. Thus we may tell what we are by what we desire.

In the frosty season of the year there is no fruit, all is barrenness ; but the nipping frost comes not from the presence of the sun, but from its absence. So, when the Lord absents

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himself, the hearts of men are at once the prey of sin and corruption.

Some Christians complain that sin still struggles within them ; blessed be God, if we feel it struggling within us, it is a proof that it cannot prevail against us.

If, by the purifying influence of the Spirit of God, I could only see one sin in me as it ought to be seen, I should have enough to lay me in the dust

I desire not only to be grieved for my own sins, but I want to be grieved at sin in others.

O for that grace whereby I may rise with holy indignation against the most distant approach of sin to my soul ! Lord, increase my abhorrence of sin. Lord, increase my watchfulness against sin. Lord, increase my desire to keep a holy conflict against that abominable evil. May I be daily agonizing and panting against it, and never be contented till everlasting victory crowns my struggles in glory.

An afflicted person may say, "I have an incurable disease, and I must reconcile myself to bear it." But I never wish to be patient under the disease of sin. The plague is an evil, but it is not a moral evil; but the plague of sin is a damnable evil, for it devilizes the heart.

SECTION II.

CHRIST.

THOUGH as sinners we are completely ruined, we have a Saviour by whom we are completely redeemed; so that, though weak in ourselves, and defective in all we do, yet, blessed be God, we are complete in Christ.

There need be no fears left in any one who can truly say, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liyeth in me."

I am sure I can never preach the *universality* of the offer of mercy through Christ in stronger language than that in which it is held forth in the scriptures.

The greatest sin a man can be guilty of, is the final rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Some persons say we eclipse the Father's glory by ascribing equal honour to the Son;

but my bible tells me, it is by the grace of God the Father, that I give the glory to God the Son.

We shall blush when we get to heaven, that we spoke so feebly, while on earth, of the power and dignity of Christ.

I do not say too much when I say, that Christ is the life of all the spiritual life his people have.

No child of God can ever think of peace with God, but as it comes through Him who is described as "our peace."*

It is the greatest of all blessedness, to know the blessedness that is to be had in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The dignity of our Saviour's person should be our glory. Christ has conferred an honour upon the manhood of every Christian, by being made man for his sake. Let us remember what God hath said—"I will dwell in them and walk in them." Let my faculties, therefore, be all used to the honour of my Redeemer's name.

* Eph. ii. 14.

May I never meditate upon all the shame and ignominy of the Saviour's death, without feeling holy self-reproach, that my sins were the means of occasioning his sufferings.

If I were to approach the throne of grace in my own worthlessness, all my prayers would be turned back upon me, and instead of a bright mercy-seat being open before me, I should see the black clouds of vengeance hanging ready to burst upon my guilty head. But, blessed be God, here is the glory—my dear Saviour has reconciled me to the Father. Sin brought the just curse of the sin-avenging law against us all; but, glory be to his name, the Lord, in the person of Christ, does not impute sin to his children, while he bids me hate all that is unholy, that I may have the same hatred to sin that he has. Being complete in Christ, I am dealt with, not as a guilty sinner, but as a justified saint. Justice has received full satisfaction at the hands of my surety; and though God abhors, and ever must abhor sin, especially in his own children, yet, as he sees me in Christ, he loves my person, and accepts my prayers in and through him. Still, this conviction should make me at all times ashamed of my sins.

Christ has lost none of his majesty by his mercy ; he has lost none of his dignity by his humiliation ; he has lost none of his riches by his poverty. Hence, while I adore him for his condescension, may I never forget the awe I ought to feel, in the remembrance of the splendour of his divine majesty.

Nothing so much convinces me of my need of Christ, as my daily sense of defective services before him.

O for a "life hid with Christ in God !" O for a perpetual belief in him ! Then can I never be poor, while he is rich ; I never can be feeble, while he is strong ; I never can be a fool, while he is my wisdom.

The Saviour must go on from conquering to conquer ; but the power by which he vanquishes is peculiarly pleasing. The heart is subdued, and the rebel sinner lays down his arms ; but the Lord, instead of dragging him in chains, makes him ride with him triumphantly in the chariot of his gospel !

If there were any thing in the bible that told

me salvation depended upon myself, I should despair. For if it were to say, "Do better," I might do better, but not so well as I ought. I love obedience, but I reproach myself after my imperfect performance of it. The great privilege of true religion, is desiring and depending upon Christ.

All my salvation depends upon the nativity, the crucifixion, the resurrection of our Lord, and the descent of his Spirit upon my heart.

O that we may find the love of Christ to have so touched our hearts, that we could not endure even to be in heaven without him.

God must cease to fix his love upon his beloved Son, before he can remove it from those who put their trust in him.

Christ is able to give far more abundantly, than I can either ask or think. After all my climbing, to get at the utmost extent of the blessings treasured up in him for me, I cannot reach them. As well may I endeavour to stretch out my hand, and pluck one of the blazing stars out of the firmament, through which

they roll in their brightness, as to reach the height of the love treasured up in Christ for my poor soul hereafter.

While I cannot obliterate a single sin, while I see there are debts against me I cannot discharge, I go to my bible, and there I find, that "by one offering Christ has for ever perfected them that are sanctified."* Take the doctrine of the atonement out of the bible, and you may take away all the rest, for aught I care; for the atonement of my Redeemer is the glory of it. I love the word which says, I am to be presented "faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy;"† that I am to be brought before God decorated with his righteousness, and purified by his Spirit, so that I may appear "without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing."

Flying to Christ is the essence of purification.

Never may I believe that I have a saving view of Christ, but as I cry out against myself, that his dying love was necessary.

I want not to trust in any saviour, but one

* Heb. x. 14.

† Jude 24.

who can save me ; and as every attribute that dwells in God the Father, is centred in God the Son, and as all these attributes are engaged to be exerted for me by my union with Christ, herein is my blessedness.

I do not preach about the coming of Christ in a personal manner, so much as I preach about the necessity of coming to him in a spiritual manner. I would rather feel "Christ within me," than have my eyes pleased with the sight of Immanuel, and have no heart to love him. Still, it would be well for us to ask ourselves, how far we do love the "appearing" of our Lord, and whether we have a happy mind to say, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly."

It is a great mercy, when the Lord keeps alive in our hearts warm thoughts respecting his redeeming love, and when we feel ourselves in a solemn state, being devoutly dedicated to God—dedicated to God through the blood of the everlasting covenant.

I need to feel every moment that I am in want, and that Jesus can supply all my wants.

Christ first builds his temple in the heart, and then he furnishes it.

I fully believe, that after thousands of years are spent in heaven, we shall be altogether surprised with fresh beams of glory, emanating from our blessed Lord.

If it be permitted me to drop one tear in the regions of eternal bliss, it will be when a gleam of holy sorrow crosses my mind, that I should ever have grieved the lovely Lamb I shall then see in the midst of the throne.

Divine power gives us to see what the glorious reality of redemption is. The curse is removed. The death of Christ was the death of the curse that thrusts the sinner from God. Heaven owned the precious sacrifice, and the Holy Spirit of the living God descended to conquer and convert hard hearts, and to make sinners new creatures in Christ Jesus the Saviour. This excites the opposition and enmity of sinful man, and he tries to prevent the work, but he cannot. O what a vain effort would it be, if thousands were to arise with the determination to obstruct the shining of the morning sun,

and to try to place some dark object between man and its beams! But nothing comes with such invincible grandeur and dignity as the all-powerful gospel, when the Saviour, in his glory, ascends the chariot of truth. He comes to conquer, and his course is victory.

My God wins me to himself, by the amazingly attractive influence that beams from him through the gospel of his dear Son. Still I would not approach him nearer than he permits me through Christ. Should we be any better off if we were nearer the orb of day? No; the glorious source of light stands at its proper distance, and proves its greatness and power by its effects. So God, in the plenitude of his own glory, shines upon the sons of men, at that distance which is best for them; and blessed be his name for every beam of the divine brightness, which comes to me through the Lord Jesus Christ.

A Justifier by his atonement, a Sanctifier by his Spirit, Christ has done the good work *for* me. He is also to do it *in* me. An *unapplied* Christ is *no* Christ.

In the burning summer heat, or in the storm,

the trees often fail to give sufficient shelter, but the rock supplies it always. Blessed be God for the "rock" Christ Jesus, who is also the fairest among the trees of the wood, under whose shadow we may sit with delight, and whose fruit is sweet to the taste.

It is a mercy to have a solemn ear, to hear the solemn voice of Christ—"whosoever will come after me let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." "Oh!" say some, "this a hard saying;" but if we are really Christ's disciples, our discipleship will soon do away with the difficulty of the hard saying, What does he bid us renounce? Only evil.

The soul of religion, is the Spirit of Christ in the mind of man.

There is nothing more plain to the believer, than the suitability of Christ's salvation to his own case.

We should endeavour to honour the work of redemption, by our close imitation of Christ.

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words—"he ever liveth to make intercession for us," pleading our cause in heaven. How did he do it on the cross? One prayer there—"Father, forgive them"—has brought multitudes to heaven. Many that heard Peter's sermon had probably cried out, "crucify him, crucify him," and yet even they were "pricked to the heart," and saved by that precious blood they had helped so wantonly to spill!

SECTION III.

REPENTANCE.

WHOEVER would be a pardoned sinner, must be first made a penitent sinner.

O may I be sensible of the infinite purity of my God, and sorrow deeply on account of my sins! I want to kneel before him, crying out that I am vile in his sight, and imploring mercy. O for true repentance, this first wise work of God the Holy Spirit! God continue this blessing to my mind till the last gasp; and when I am lying down to die, may I still be crying out for mercy, as a sinner saved by the power of grace alone!

Repentance is not to be considered as an outward action, but as an inward feeling. The word *repentance*, means *a change of mind*.* I can no more be reconciled to sin after this

* μετάνοια.

change has taken place, than I can be reconciled to burning after feeling the flame.

Sorrow for sin is one thing, and despairing of divine mercy through Christ, quite another. I do not want to wipe away the penitential tear ; but I want to "behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." We shall despair least when we repent deepest, for repentance is a good evidence that we are right.

I never said that repentance will bring a sinner to heaven ; but I am sure it will keep him out of the way that leads to hell.

Sometimes a man remarks, when his acknowledgments of penitence are accepted by a good friend whom he has offended, "I believe you forgive me, but I shall never be able to forgive myself." So he who tastes most of the forgiving love of Christ, will find that there is nothing like a sense of pardoning grace to increase repentance.

I do not judge that I am born of God, because I was once terrified, and thought I should

go to hell for my sins. Repentance is an abiding grace of the Holy Spirit in a renewed mind.

I do not tell people to go and soften their own hearts ; but I pray to God to soften them.

I never expect the depth of my repentance to wash away my sins. Instead of looking upon my repentance as the cause of my forgiveness, I feel that my repentance wants forgiveness.

God knows how to pardon the sinner, and yet to make him grieve and lament over himself, while pardon is pronounced. The precious blood of Christ, while it saves me from guilt, increases my sorrow for it.

Repentance is necessarily a purifying grace. May I have it with me as my dying companion ; may I have it in me at my expiring breath. I should not be sorry to suppose, that my last words would be, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Come, dear repenting sinner, if thou art crying that thou thinkest thou art not pardoned, come to Jesus Christ continually, and sooner or

later, thou shalt have a sweet sense of his pardoning love made known to thy heart. Plead with Christ, till such time as he shows thee mercy and love ; till thou hast the witness within thee of thy pardon and salvation.

My soul has been blessed with a sorrow, that has made it full of joy.

I wish, with all my heart, that sin may grieve us a thousand times more as believers, than ever it did as sinners. I hope we shall always keep in mind our days of ignorance, and drop tears for sins committed in them. I remember a son, who, upon his father's being reconciled to him after some offence, wept bitterly when assured of his forgiveness. The father wished to comfort him, and said, "Why do you weep now?" He replied, "I do not weep that you have forgiven me, but I weep that I should ever have grieved such a father."

Watching; praying, looking up to God, are all branches which grow on the tree of repentance unto life.

I pray to God, that I may never know the

day, in which I do not feel a holy sorrow for sin.

I well remember some tears which once fell from a godly minister, while I was talking to him, and telling him I was called by grace at sixteen years of age. I asked him why he wept. He said, "I was thinking of that passage—'who also were in Christ before me.'* I never thought of Christ till I was fifty." How many ought to lament that they did not begin earlier ; that they did so much work for Satan, and so little time is now left them to work for God.

What does the resolution, "I will repent when I die," mean ? Why, that a man intends to enjoy the folly of sin till he cannot turn in his bed !

I had ten thousand times better be among those who weep over sin, than among those who make light of their own wickedness.

If I live under the daily inspiration of that grace which keeps repentance alive, I shall never

* Rom. xvi. 17.

have done with it, till I am freed from every thing that needs repentance.

The Israelites fell down and worshipped the golden calf, being merry. This is not the way with God's people ; he fills them with godly sorrow, and never communicates his joy till he gets them out of themselves, and unites them to him.

Repentance is a very busy grace, searching out evil in the sinner's heart, that it may be ejected wherever it is found.

I doubt whether God beholds any grace with more genuine delight, than he does that of holy brokenness of heart.

The first evidence of real conversion is real contrition.

The best watchman against sin, is the holy grace of repentance.

Repentance is a grace that is in every person who is holy. A man need not be taught to grieve when he feels bodily pain, or suffers a loss that brings him to poverty. In such a case,

he *naturally* feels and laments his misfortunes. Just so it is with the child of God. He says, "I delighted in sin once, and indulged in it: I made it the enjoyment of my ungodly life; but I now mourn over it, for the contrary inclination has found its way into my breast." The new man experiences a holy sorrow for the remains of the old evil, just as St. Paul felt when he cried out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!"*

I can never think with a man I heard once say, "What can a believer have to do with repentance?" The holier I become, the deeper my repentance must be; the nearer I get to God, the more I shall sorrow over the remains of that sinfulness which he hates. I verily believe, that could an angel be guilty of one sin in a thousand years, that one sin would cause him more grief, than all the mourning sin causes in a Christian during the longest life.

When I shed the tear of repentance, I find Faith stands near me to cheer my drooping heart, and to give me to understand, that while

* Rom. vii. 24.

I condemn myself, I shall not be condemned by my God.

Judas had the curse of despair: but Peter had the grace of repentance.

I once visited a poor wretch when I was at Cambridge, who suffered death for a crime of which he had been found guilty. Mr. Pentycross was with me, and we spent some time in prayer with him. When we were in expectation every moment of the last awful summons from the executioner, I asked him if he could give us any hope that he was a penitent; and his reply was, bursting into tears, "O, sir, my heart is as hard as a stone." O my God, save us from hard, impenitent hearts. Where shall I find language that will sufficiently explain the danger of an unfeeling heart! From "hardness of heart, good Lord deliver us."

Our condemnation will not be in our being sinners, but in our being hardened and impenitent sinners, neglecting the salvation that infinite mercy has provided.

I remember, many years ago, a person who

was blamed for shedding tears of godly contrition. "Why, you said," it was remarked, "that religion produces joy." To this the pious mourner replied, "It is not religion that makes me melancholy, but the want of more of it." God give us more of this blessed melancholy, that we may pant for the glorious evidence, which shows the great work to be materially begun. It is the grace of repentance unto life which carries us into high places, even while we pass through this lower world.

There is nothing that comes more forcibly into my mind now I am drawing so very near the grave, than my need of repentance. I grieve that I cannot live nearer to God, as I draw nearer to his eternal presence. Evangelical repentance does not break the heart, but it melts the heart. My soul aspires to sit at the Redeemer's feet, as the only place where I can find hope, joy, and all the other enlivening graces of the Spirit.

When people cry out against themselves, because they are so far off from God, that is the time in which the Lord draws near to them.

Wherever there is repentance towards God, it is accompanied with a large tribe of other graces. For instance, there comes the grace of faith, and my poor weeping eyes look upon him whom my sins have pierced. Then the dear Saviour sweetly says, "look unto me and be saved."

SECTION IV.

FAITH, AS CONNECTED WITH HOPE AND LOVE.

MY faith is not an imagination ; I rest upon it, and find myself refreshed thereby. Faith has its origin in heaven ; gloriously it comes from heaven, and brings all who possess it up to heaven, filling them with the celestial mind of the Redeemer. They know nothing of believing, who have not found faith to be a purifying grace. By believing, we are "changed into the same image (that of Christ) from day to day."

It requires, I apprehend, a great deal of caution and spiritual wisdom to preach about the assurance of faith. I do not say, that some happy souls do not draw nearer to this point than their fellow-christians ; but I do not expect to gain a greater degree of it than St. Paul, who always had holy fear mingled with his glorious expectations.

Faith presents divine realities to our mental

eye; hope, that lovely, lively grace, goes out, and follows them home.

The command is, "fight the good fight of faith." Blessed be God, though there are many warriors who enter into battle with doubts and fears as to the issue of the conflict, it is not so among the soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ, who wage the celestial warfare. Victory is declared before the combat commences, and as sure as they begin to fight, faith tells them they shall be made "more than conquerors."

May I know in whom I have believed, by feeling the fine vivifying effects true faith produces on the mind.

I dare not call any thing a work of faith, but as I am directed towards it by the word of God.

I do not know any passage of scripture, where true faith is mentioned otherwise than as a practical grace.

There is enough of light beaming through the obscurity of present things, to convince the

eye of faith that there is a very bright sun behind.

Every holy thought, which is felt as the genuine offspring of regeneration in the heart, is a sort of heavenly invitation to go out after God, and to meet him, to receive by faith all that grace he promises to communicate to his believing people.

I want to feel such a solid good thing implanted in my mind, that I cannot have a doubt my faith is of God.

Children are fond of exerting the little strength they have. We all know that their frame gains strength by this. So the children of God find their faith increased by daily exercising it.

If I can but believe that all which occurs to me is meant for my good, I shall get good out of every thing.

My soul can only be kept alive, as the divine life is communicated to me through faith, moment after moment, by my God.

I once saw a child with a pretty bird, to whose foot he had fastened a string, and so let it fly while he held it. I bargained for the little captive, and the instant it became mine, I loosened it, and let it go; and away it flew into the air, rejoicing in its release. Had the creature possessed a mind, I question if it would not have returned to me; but it had no mind; I could not make it know that I was its friend. Thus the believer flies away when set at liberty from sin, and from the world,—while God not only gives him freedom, but subdues his soul, acquaints him with his benefactor, and causes him, after all his excursions, to return, and repose believingly and lovingly on his bosom.

God himself comes down as the God of love into the hearts of the faithful, and there sheds his love abroad through all the faculties. The understanding, the will, the affections, and all belonging to believers, are filled with the love that flows from him. The understanding loves to comprehend him, the affections to follow him, and the will to obey him.

One of the most glorious communications to believers, is the power of loving God supremely.

The more I am under the influence of that sacred love, which is shed abroad in the believing heart by the Holy Ghost, the more I shall feel an unfeigned concern that I am not nearer, and cannot get nearer, to God every day.

My faith is the excellent messenger that goes out after God, and climbs up into heaven, to bring down such blessings into my heart in time, as tend to fit me for eternity.

The whole character of the Christian seems to be comprehended in this title—a believer in Christ.

The food of faith is in the promises of a faithful God.

We need never be afraid of mixing *fear* and *faith* together. I need not fear Christ ; but I do greatly need to fear myself. The apostle did not so much fear he *should be* a cast-away, as, looking at himself, that he *might be* one.

O for the wings of faith and love, to fly above this world ; and when I have them, may I see that they are so constructed and protected, that

contact with the things of earth may not injure or pollute them.

The love of the wicked cannot be called real love ; for while they seem very pleasant and cheerful with each other, there is no genuine affection amongst them. No person knows what it is to have good fellowship with others, till he has been taught first of all to have fellowship with God.

Love is the diamond amongst the jewels of the believer's breastplate. The other graces shine, like the precious stones of nature, with their own peculiar lustre and various hues ; but the diamond is *white*—now, in white, all the colours are united : so in love is centred every other Christian grace and virtue—*love is the fulfilling of the law.*

We must not fancy that we are believers in Christ, because we believe certain essential parts of the gospel to be true, without feeling its power upon the heart.

The soul which lies believingly and humbly at the feet of the Saviour, will soon see hope de-

scending, as a mystic ladder from above, inviting him to ascend to heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

We are half way to heaven when our faith is in full exercise.

Thanks be to God, it is revealed in the plainest language, that Jesus Christ came to put away my sins, (I have, alas! enough of them,) "by the sacrifice of himself." I rejoice that I know how I may be forgiven. I might have ransacked my reformations over, and over again, and never had one moment's peace of mind; but now I know how to obtain pardon and comfort through the hope I have in the gospel, "a hope that maketh not ashamed." The work is done, my redemption is complete, and I have nothing to do as a sinner, but to accept, through faith, of that perfect salvation which God has wrought out on my behalf.

While all confidence in the things of the world proves to be vanity and vexation of spirit, glory be to God, faith in the gospel furnishes us with substance. How finely does St. Paul describe that glorious mainspring of the graces of

the heart when he calls it "the *substance* of things hoped for." That is not vanity ; for when I touch substance, I can well feel that I do not come in contact with a bubble ; I recognize a reality. When I stand upon a rock, I am not like a thing that is carried aloft upon a volume of smoke. I have solidity to tread on. Now there is no real substance but what faith brings home to the heart ; he that believeth and loveth God shall "inherit substance."*

* Prov. viii. 21.

SECTION V.

HOLINESS.

God cannot make me happy, except he makes me holy. Angels find all their happiness in their holiness. Holiness is not the *cause* of salvation, but it is the invariable *effect* of salvation ; and I think I may be bold enough to say, that not one drop of the blood of the everlasting covenant could ever have been shed for man, but that God might accomplish his gracious design of restoring his holy image on the human mind.

Holiness is the *white stone* ; the evidence of our acquittal.

The Lord gives none of his holy graces except to the pure in heart : he *prepares* the soul, before he *fills* the soul.

Let a man be made holy, and he will give all the glory of his holiness to the grace of God

the Holy Spirit. However some may pride themselves on a righteousness of their own, I am sure they who are holy, will ascribe their blessed condition to the grace which brought them into it. It is impossible to believe, that those bright celestial beings, the angels of God, who are living in the divine presence without the least stain of sin, can have any other imagination of their perfection, than that they receive all their holiness from the excellency of their God.

Instead of seeking a reward for being righteous, let us remember that God cannot give us a better reward than righteousness itself.

How many hurtful things should we instinctively abstain from, if we were among the number of the blessed ones, described as the *pure in heart*.

We know with what an excellent nicety the skilful engraver can represent the forms he designs to produce; but it is essential to his art, that the substance he engraves upon should be suited to receive the impression. What could he do on the surface of a coarse tile? So God

first refines the heart, to fit it to receive his lovely image, and then, by the operation of his Spirit completes the glorious work.

Wherever a true knowledge of a holy God is brought home to the heart, it fills us with confusion that we are so unholy. I read my own condemnation in the purity of my God. How shall I stand at his appearance without holiness, when he can sooner cease to exist than he can cease to hate sin !

When a person means to erect a handsome edifice upon the site of a great number of decayed buildings, it never once enters his mind, that he can convert them into any use for this purpose. "No," he says, "let them all be pulled down, and taken away." So the natural rubbish of the heart must be taken away, for it never can be employed in the erection of a holy temple to the glory of God.

I can never look upon God with joy while I remain impure. When my eyes were diseased, I could not look upon the light ; but the fault was not in the light, but in my inability to receive it. It is a sure sign of a deceased soul,

when it cannot enjoy the light of holiness, nor bear the shining of the candle of the Lord.

Though the world is very dim-sighted as to its vision of Christ's personal glory and beauty, yet it is very clear-sighted as to how much of his holy image it sees in us.

God cannot deal with us in a way contrary to himself. He only deals with us to make us like himself. If I do not feel the divine nature in me, I shall not be disgusted with sin as I ought to be.

The Lord knows all his creatures ; but he knows none of them in a way of approbation, but those in whom he sees the reflection of his own image.

I wish to view God in all his ways, and to admire and adore the great Creator ; but the grand mode of discovering his glorious power, is to regard his work upon the souls of his people, whereby he makes them new creatures, and adorns them with the beauty of holiness.

A true Christian manifests the essential glory

of the divine holiness. I use the following expression for want of a better :—The *moral excellency* of God beams forth from those who are made spiritual by him.

It will avail us nothing that we pass well among men on earth ; holiness alone can fit us for heaven.

I believe we can do more good by being good, than all the wisdom treasured up in man has power to effect.

There is something remarkably commanding in the dignified spirit of holiness : the man who has it, must be honourable.

Holy longing for God is the plainest proof that we possess God.

From the moment I rise, till the moment I go to rest, I must never once put off the "breast-plate of righteousness."

I dare not sin for this reason—God is holy, and I want to find my happiness in him.

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I dare not sin for this reason—God is holy, and I want to find my happiness in him.

If angels were not *naturally* holy, they would be uncomfortably holy.

We cannot see a diamond in the dark ; but if light is brought in, it shews itself at once. So the holiness of the true believer shines "in the light of the Lord" according to the command, "arise, shine, for thy light is come."

When I set about the work of being holy, I pray to God to give me the holy will, and then I am sure I shall have the holy power.

I once heard a curious conversation on the cause of the likeness of young children to their parents, especially with regard to expression of countenance. One suggested, that as the parent who nursed the infant smiled on it, the little sympathetic babe smiled again and caught the mode from the parent. So, while we are carried as babes in Christ on the arms of our Redeemer, he smiles upon us, and awakens a sweet response from us again and again, till, at length, we grow up after his own likeness.

Christ is the bridegroom of his spouse the church, and adorns every member of it with the

robe of his own righteousness, and the jewels of his holy graces. Still the believer is humble, though decked in this celestial attire ; and as the loving wife thinks not so much of the diamonds she wears, as of the faithful husband who bestowed them, so the Christian does not value himself for the beauty of his holy garments, but on account of the alliance to the Lord and Saviour who gave them.

What is the wedding garment? Some say it is the *imputed* righteousness of Christ ; some, that it is the *imparted* righteousness of Christ ; others, that it is *holiness of character*. I consider it to consist of all three together. "Putting on the Lord Jesus Christ," is possessing his righteousness *imputed*, his holiness *imparted*, and his example *imitated*. He first makes the robe, and then fits us to wear it.

The moon is in its full-orbed brightness when its disk is turned completely towards us, and towards the sun. The Lord help us to turn our faces towards the sun of righteousness, and his glorious beams will be finely reflected on the world around us.

I desire to set the holiness of God always before me, that I may be abased at my sinfulness in his sight.

What a little mind is that of man, when compared with infinite intelligence!—yet there is something striking in the thought, that this little mind is capable of enjoying the holiness of God, and dealing spiritually with him.

What is salvation? Holiness in time, and perfection in eternity.

My foolish nature will certainly be overcome by my fleshly appetite, unless a wise and holy spirit is created in me, whereby I am enabled to delight in obeying the will of God.

There will be no need to teach a man to be virtuous, if God has made him holy.

Some people think religion a misery. What, a misery in holiness!—then God himself must be miserable. O no, a holy God communicates himself to the soul, that he may make it rejoice in him, and in him only.

If I would be a suitable companion to men of superior minds, I must have a proper education. So, if I am to be the associate of holy angels, I must be made as angels are.

Every new-born soul has a holy taste given it, or it could not "hunger and thirst after righteousness."

I love to see all the sweet flowers and fruits, which God makes the earth bring forth *to please us*, and then I think, O that I could bear more fruits of righteousness *to please him*.

SECTION VI.

PRAYER.

IN all our devotions we should look solemnly to our hearts, as soon as our lips are opened before the Lord. It is an awful thing to deal carelessly with God.

Prayer, what is it? I know what it is—it is the Spirit speaking in me; and when God hears my prayer, he hears his own language in me.

I love to feel my wants, because I know how to go to Him who can supply them all.

Some persons, who have no idea what prayer is, make a great merit of their prayers, and fancy they do God service, by going as beggars to his footstool.

They who truly renounce their own will, and rest purely on the teaching of the Holy Ghost,

find a solid, wise speaking vouchsafed to their minds, whereby they can ask aright for grace to live to God's glory.

The Pharisees were to receive the "greater damnation" for their prayers: so is our condemnation obvious, when we have nothing to bring before God but words.

Prayer is of no avail, unless the soul is in earnest with God. Observe that small but sweetly melodious bird, the lark, which keeps longer on the wing than most others, how when he tires, he drops a little, and then rises with redoubled effort, determined to sing out his song. Thus the praying soul pursues its devotions before the Lord.

O the sublimity of fervent prayer! How it dignifies those who are continually found in it! It is indeed a wondrous grace, teaching us to address God in his own way. What I say, he dictates! My words of prayer, though polluted by the breath I breathe, still, blessed be his name, go up an unpolluted sacrifice presented by Christ. I put my prayers into my Redeemer's hand; he pardons and purifies what is mine,

takes them spotless to his Father's throne, and they are answered by innumerable blessings.

Never was a spiritual good earnestly desired, which God did not vouchsafe to give.

The promises should be our annal of prayer. We pray best when we expect most, and I am sure we can never raise our expectations beyond God's assurances, who says, that he will give "far more abundantly above all that we can ask or think."

It is a poor thing to have strong words and weak desires; but it is a blessing indeed when, though the words may be feeble, the desires are strong.

Sometimes a man may say, "I think God does not answer me, because my prayers are so unworthy." They are not so, if God has created the spirit of prayer within, and if they are offered through Christ, the great atoning sacrifice, perfumed with his incense and cleansed by his blood. Though what comes from ourselves deserves no answer, yet through him we shall never pray in vain.

There is nothing like a broken and contrite heart to teach us our need of prayer. Let a man hold his peace if he can, when he has really felt his sin.

It is a great proof that our minds are fashioned according to the will of God, when there is a lovely correspondence between our prayers and his word—when the language of scripture is the language of our feelings. God loves to hear himself speak in the soul, and what he speaks in us, he will condescend to grant to our everlasting good.

Blessed is the man who knows how to whisper out to God the inmost secrets of his soul.

There can be no true devotion where there is no true knowledge.

It is a sure sign that we pray aright, if we are enabled to desire nothing but what God has declared he delights in giving.

A very small degree of knowledge might teach us, that if we beg pardon for our sins, in the cold way, which evidences our knowing nothing of them, we only contract more sin.

Conformity to the divine will, is one of the desires always uppermost in a believer's prayer.

We should not be contented with merely praying; but should be continually looking to ourselves, to see if our prayers are heard.

To the man who has not the spirit of prayer, the fountain of life is dried up.

I do not believe spiritual prayer can ever be unavailing prayer, though it is not answered instantaneously. I may pray for my own growth in grace, and not feel its sensible increase. If we water our flowers, we do not *see them grow*, but in time we perceive that *they are grown*.

If prayer does not cause us to leave off sinning, sinning will soon make us leave off praying. The great thing is, to live as we pray.

Our prayers are never salutary to our minds, unless they are efficacious as respects our lives.

I differ in opinion from those who do not pray, till they imagine they are moved by the Spirit. Does God need our prayers, that he

should give an immediate impulse? Verily, a child of God is a child of prayer, and has that spirit always abiding in him. When I call on a Christian to pray, I only tell him to exert what is within himself.

Though the spirit of prayer is not always acting, it is always dwelling within the believer's soul.

If we pray for others, though the prayer is not answered for them, it will be for ourselves.

When the windows are open on a summer's morning, the dew enters, and so damps the tinder, that it will not take fire. Thus may the dew of heaven damp our corruptions; may prayer bring down the dew that shall prevent our inflammable nature from taking fire, amongst the sparks elicited by collision with the world.

Never attempt to practise a single grace, without praying to God for grace to put it into practice.

God has dignified prayer, by commanding his Son to "ask" him.

The Christian is commanded to "pray without ceasing." He cannot always be engaged in the positive act, but he should have what I call *a holy aptitude for prayer*. The bird is not always on the wing, but he is ready to fly in an instant; so the believer is not always on the wing of prayer, but he has such a gracious aptitude for this exercise, that he is prepared in a moment, when in need or danger, to fly for refuge to his God.

How much may be said about the holy grace of prayer—of the glorious God to whom prayer is addressed; of the dignity of the channel through which it passes—the Saviour's mediation; of its inspiration into our hearts by the Holy Ghost; and of the praise it causes us to render unto God again, when answered!

We are to be "instant in prayer." Good old John Bunyan represents his pilgrim, when in the valley of humiliation, as laying aside all his other weapons, and taking only that of *all prayer*. We are invincible, while we are prayerful.

There never can be *communion* between us

and the Lord, until there is *connection* between us and the Lord.

My chief confidence that I am right with God, arises from the desire I feel to keep up a holy intercourse with him.

Though sensible of the defectiveness of my prayers, I would not but be a praying man for a thousand worlds.

It is very pleasant to go to God in prayer, when I know that I shall be happy in the enjoyment of the blessings I am directed to seek for.

I imagine the song of an angel cannot be more pleasing to our merciful Redeemer, than an earnest address from a poor sinner, to be delivered from the evil of his own heart.

When I want to act without seeking direction from God, I set myself up against him.

The instant I open my lips in prayer, I wholly give myself up to God.

SECTION VII.

AFFLICTION.

WHILE God corrects with one hand, he supports with the other, and makes us say, even in affliction, "his mercy endureth for ever."

We cannot have fertilizing showers on the earth without a clouded heaven above. It is thus with our trials.

Many an ox may be worked hard in the field, but after a time, its owner may say, "let him be turned into a rich pasture." There he lives without molestation in luxury and ease; but it is preparatory to his death. Sinner, take care of unsanctified prosperity, its end is death!

The devil tempts that he may bring us *into* sin; but the Lord sends trials that he may bring us *out of* it.

There are some graces belonging to the chil-

dren of God, which can only be exercised in the furnace.

Whatever God gives us, we should take it thankfully, and use it to his glory ; but when he takes it away, our business is to say, " Father, thou knowest what is best for thy children." O we could part with a thousand worlds, if we were but filled with the power of the world to come.

It is a great mercy to have a bitter put into that draught, which Satan has sweetened as a vehicle for his poison.

We should not repine at dark providences, for there is light on the other side of them.

Let me be put into the furnace, if it renders me malleable before God, and let me rise out of the furnace with the image of Jesus on my heart.

There are two sorts of trials, the one of God's sending, the other of our own making. The former are wisely sent, but we must expect to suffer under those we bring upon ourselves.

Were we more convinced of the depravity of our hearts, we should be more resigned to the chastisement with which God is pleased to correct us. Affliction's rods are made of many twigs, but they are all cut from the tree of life.

The painter knows that dark shades bring out his finest figures. Thus the Lord often exhibits the brightest of his saints in affliction.

If afflictions work good in us, they will only be as waves to lift our bark into the haven of eternal rest.

What is my duty in all my perplexities? Humbly to wait on the Lord, and to seek his guidance step by step. "O Lord," I would say, "thou hast enabled me to take one step, give me grace to proceed farther. Bless me with wisdom to meet the next difficulty, that it may be overcome. There is another trial coming, help me through it, for I need direction and strength from above. Let every succeeding dispensation tend to the purification of my soul, and to the increase of my reliance on thee."

Poor old Jacob reckoned wrong when he

said, "all these things are against me." He was mistaken indeed, for they were all for him.

If I am right with God, my desire will not be so much that he should help me out of my trials, as that he should preserve and bless me in them. The true Christian is "patient in tribulation," and if God denies his request to be delivered from any trouble, he can even praise him for the denial.

I knew an excellent woman, who was extremely generous to the poor in the days of her affluence. At length, the wicked conduct of her own child reduced her to poverty. She then said to me, "It was once my duty to do good, it is now my duty to suffer ill; but all will be peace and joy hereafter; these 'light afflictions' I find are working out for me 'a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.'"

It is nearly six thousand years since Abel was cruelly murdered by his bloody brother Cain. Does he regard now those painful strokes, by which his soul was driven out of his body into glory! No, he has before him everlasting joy.

and gladness, and sorrow and sighing have long
flown away.

There is no sweeter spirit than a yielding
spirit, submitting to God, and saying, "thy will
be done."

LINES ON AFFLICTION.*

Thy suffering disciples, dear Saviour draw nigh,
And under thy cross, on thy mercy rely;
Supported by thee, they can banish all pain:
Disciples of Jesus shall never complain.

Should the sword of thy judgment go forth through the land,
While the stroke we confess would be just at thy hand;
We'll sing of thy mercy again, and again:
Disciples of Jesus shall never complain.

Should the arrows of sickness and death fly abroad,
Each arrow we own would be just from our God,
In humble submission, the lot we sustain:
Disciples of Jesus shall never complain.

Should blasting and mildew in judgment destroy
The corn and the wine, we in mercy enjoy;
No losses shall grieve us, e'en death shall be gain:
Disciples of Jesus shall never complain.

* These lines were kindly sent to me, in Mr. Hill's own
hand-writing, by J. Dalton, Esq. of the Priory, Peckham.
To the best of my knowledge, they have never been printed
before.

Should the Lord by a murrain the cattle destroy,
No anxious disquiet our minds should annoy;
Should he deluge our harvest with tempest and rain,
Disciples of Jesus shall never complain.

Should the wife of my bosom be torn from my breast,
Or an Isaac as lovely as Abraham possessed,
'T was the Lord that both gave and demanded again:
Disciples of Jesus shall never complain.

SECTION VIII.

GRACE.*

INSTEAD of grace making me negligent, it is impossible to have grace without being made diligent.

Grace not only teaches me to *act* without anger and revenge, but forbids me to *feel* them.

* The word *Grace*, as found in scripture, is a comprehensive term. I think, however, its uses are comprised within the three following heads:—

1. The gospel doctrine of *grace*, that is the *gratuitous* offer of reconciliation to God through Christ, as opposed to his wrath—to the debt due to his broken law and offended justice—to man's desert. It is the proclamation of the free, unmerited favour of God in the covenant of grace to penitent sinners.—Rom. v. 15, *to end*; Rom. xi. 6; 2^d Tim. i. 9; Rom. vi. 14; John i. 17; Gal. v. 4; Ephes. i. 7; Tit. ii. 11; Heb. ii. 9; 2 Cor. viii. 9.

2. The work of true religion carried on in believers, by the presence of the Holy Spirit in their hearts, whereby they bring forth fruit to God's glory, and are enabled to "grow in grace," (2 Pet. iii. 18,) while each confesses with St. Paul, "by the grace of God I am what I am," (1 Cor. xv. 20.) Vid. John i. 16; Prov. iv. 9; Rom. xii. 6; 2 Cor. xii. 9; Ephes. iv. 7; 2 Tim. ii. 1; Acts iv. 33; 2 Cor. i. 12; Heb. x. 29; xii. 28.

3. The happy condition of the regenerate, as opposed to their state by nature—"the grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God," (Rom. v. 2,)—the "grace and peace" St. Paul invoked on his converts.—Rom. i. 5, &c. &c.

All therefore that is said of grace has reference to one of these three things—the Covenant of grace—the Spirit of grace—the effects of grace, which divines have called "*graces*."—Ed.

I pray to God that the nearer I get to his kingdom, the more I may feel of the grace of the kingdom upon my soul.

A thief, coming to rob a house, said "I dare not, there is a light in it." God grant that we may have the light of grace burning in our hearts, as the best preservative against our spiritual enemies.

The insects prey in the spring on the young leaves of a tree; but the vital sap causes them to sprout again. So grace in the soul repairs the injury it receives from the petty attacks of the cares of the world.

I pray God I may never be so cursed, as to have the power of grace suspended in me, nor experience the moment in which I might say, "Now I am without God."

God never pours his heavenly wine into an unclean vessel; he cleanses the soul, that it may receive the gift of grace.

The highest grace I can attain, is to give myself up to the management of my God. The

first grace of Christianity is a spirit of submission.

We make a good use of the covenant of grace, if whenever we are in danger from sin, we come freely to Christ Jesus. He entered into covenant on our behalf, not only to die in the sinner's stead, but that sin should die in the sinner. We should call upon God, against every rising evil that comes into our minds; we should invoke Omnipotence to take vengeance on it, and vengeance will surely come. Nothing is more encouraging, than the help of the almighty Lord, against the remains of sin in the souls of his people.

I cannot know what my next action will be, nor how I am to perform it; but if I have the grace of God dwelling in me, I have a perpetual prompter for my good, and it will be my ever-ready guide and preserver. Grace is not a little thing, to be played with according to my fancy, but it is the glorious gift of God himself, sweetly compelling me to live to his praise.

Christianity is the religion that reigns in all its heavenly power, throughout every faculty of

the soul. It enriches the understanding, sets all the passions in motion after that which is good, and makes us feel that God is dwelling in us in a way of holiness. Thus he prepares us by daily communications of grace, to be partakers "of the inheritance of the saints in light," in that day, when, having finished the work of righteousness, and put the top-stone to the heavenly building, he will bring us to shout eternally to his praise, singing, "grace, grace unto it."

Wherever there is grace, there will be gratitude.

None are ever brought to their senses, but by the grace of God. Every man is running upon a fool's errand, and acting the fool, till God blesses him with divine wisdom.

I feel, that to keep up heavenly-mindedness, requires a great deal of holy looking to God. I do not expect to be saved from the power of sin, but as by the grace of God I am raised above it.

I am a poor worm, that can never even lift

up a desire for salvation, but as God creates it in me by his Holy Spirit, and fans it into exercise by the operation of his grace.

It requires a great deal of grace to get above the world, so as to "sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus," and look down upon what we have left as not worth loving.

Am I fighting against my own corruption in my own strength? Am I struggling to overcome, by my own power, that which has overcome its thousands? Can I expect to prevail in my guilty state, when Adam even in innocence, could not withstand the tempter's power? Yet the enemy must be overcome:—happy I cannot be till this takes place. Where then is the remedy? A remedy is to be found; but not in myself—in the grace of my God.

We should be better witnesses for God, if we were but more abundant partakers of his grace. Every thing God has made is meant, more or less, to witness to his glory. All nature bespeaks him wise and good. There are many creatures not endowed with mind; but I am made an intelligent being, finely capable of in-

tercourse with him by whom I was made, who I believe, created me for his glory, and will communicate to my heart that grace, which alone can enable me to shine forth to his praise.

I wish some who profess to be "not of the world," would be a little more cautious and consistent. Let us explain what grace is, by a gracious conduct.

If there be some things which I am called on to do for the Lord, that appear a little humbling to flesh and blood, grace should teach me to remember, that the dignity of the Master confers dignity on the work. If the Lord employs me to carry alms, to some wretched fellow-creature in a cellar or a garret, may I feel myself honoured by such an employment.

There is not a blessing that grace will not teach me to spiritualize; each mercy I enjoy preaches a sermon to my heart. I want my bread to be an ordinance to me; my bed to represent to me my rest after death; the sun which shines upon me, to remind me of the "sun of righteousness;" and the air that surrounds me, and wherein I breathe, to teach me to

remember that I should live in the element of holiness. I would never quench my thirst, without recollecting the fountain of life.

It is wrong to form an opinion of our state before God, by any thing which occurs to us in the way of external providence ; but we may judge safely, when we examine what grace does in our hearts in a way of holiness, through the operation of outward events.

Before I can be accepted of God, I must have in me that which his divine nature can consistently own.

A man who uses an earthly sword, is obliged to support it by an effort of his own hand ; but he who wields the sword of the Spirit, will find his hand strengthened thereby. I love that passage, "we are strengthened with might, by his Spirit in the inner man." No mind can understand these words, except by the power of divine grace.

Some who professed that they would go through fire and water for Christ, have been

found not to have grace enough to enable them to bear a nick-name !

Man by sin has rendered himself perfectly insignificant, but when grace comes, it restores him to somewhat of his primeval dignity. God does not give him merely a string of cold laws to obey, but approaches in the majesty of divine power, to reassume the government of his mind ; to illuminate the understanding with beams divinely bright ; to make the will correspond to his will, and to cause the lips to offer with sincerity, this comprehensive petition, "thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

If we wish to be *practically* holy, we must be *experimentally* holy.

I had almost ventured to say, "can Deity himself give me any thing more beautiful and honourable, than that grace which makes my mind his from day to day ?"

The grace of God in the soul, is like a river which divides itself into streams that water and fertilize all the faculties.

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The grace of God in the soul, is like a river which divides itself into streams that water and fertilize all the faculties.

Thanks be to God for holy impossibilities. Christians *cannot* live in sin, because the grace of God is in them.

If I have the grace of God in time, I have an evidence better than if an angel spoke, that I shall be with him to all eternity.

Though the world necessarily occupies our time, it will not occupy a heart wherein there is grace. No man will carry on his temporal occupations well, who does not enjoy a spiritual frame of mind.

If I am not supported into glory by the omnipotence of God's grace, I must drop into the pit of hell from the very gate of heaven.

There will be an abundance of water in every well, which has a good spring at the bottom; so let the water of life spring up in my soul, and then I shall be filled with the fulness of God's grace, and live to his glory.

O blessed be God for that grace, which makes the most dull-hearted man shine with a heavenly lustre.

I am a wonder to myself, for grace is a wonder.

If sin is turned out of our hearts by grace, it will be turned out of our houses too.

There is great beauty in the idea, that I am to expect to find graces in my mind, in correspondence with the glorious attributes of God—holiness, mercy, justice, love.

The grace we have for the day does for the day, like the daily manna given to Israel. "Give us this day our daily bread"—the Christian means both the bread of heaven and the bread of earth. We need a supply for our souls as well as our bodies; it would be a poor supply if it were for this world only.

The idea of pouring out the Holy Ghost is taken from the eastern custom of pouring forth a fine compost of odours, like the alabaster box of ointment. Grace in the heart is a sweet perfume, and makes the believer fragrant to his Redeemer's praise, whom—because of the "savour of his good ointments" the virgins are said to love.

I once reproved a female who was very high in her sentiments, but very unruly in her tempers. "Do you think," said she, "that a few ill tempers will exclude me from the covenant of grace?" My answer was, "I believe no one can be in the covenant of grace, who has not the graces of the covenant; and these are love, joy, peace, gentleness, and such like." If an angel from heaven were to come down and announce me to be a child of God, unless I were conscious of enjoying the grace of God, I could not believe him. Blessed be God, the covenant of grace can never be separated from communications of grace to the believer.

All the means of grace without the grace of the means, are but as the casket without the jewels.

I do not think God can give me a finer guardian grace in my passage through time, than his holy fear.

I wonder that any man should think he has power to subdue one corruption, but as the grace of the Holy Spirit worketh in him mightily.

I cannot exist as a Christian for an instant, without the divine life. The moment God withdraws his grace, I fall back into my native nothingness.

While I thank God for the gift of his grace, I must still look to him to support the grace of his giving.

The reason sinners cannot enter the kingdom, is that the grace of the kingdom does not enter into them.

Man is placed in a lost state beyond the possibility of recovery, but as grace divinely manifested to the heart by the Spirit of God, accomplishes his restoration. No dead man can quicken himself; no guilty person can acquit himself; no bankrupt can discharge his debts in full—this is our spiritual condition, and therefore if not saved by free grace, we are for ever ruined.

When a boy at school, I was catechized by a learned man, who told me "God was to *second* my good endeavours." I thought him, I remember, sadly mistaken. Undoubtedly the Lord

may *second* our graces if he gives them, but what is there in us by nature to bring forth fruit unto holiness, unless the Lord has planted it?

Were all the graces of the Spirit offered me, to be in my own keeping, such is my distrust of myself, that I should humbly pray the Lord to take them under his care, to be preserved for me by *him* alone, that they might be supplied to me as I needed them.

SECTION IX.

ELECTION*—CONVERSION—FRAMES—PERSEVERANCE.

WHOSOEVER is willing to come to Christ, has one of the sweetest signs of election that can be possibly enjoyed, for he never would have been willing if God had not made him so.

An omniscient God must foresee the ultimate destiny of me, his creature, but he has placed before me a plan of action, which I must pursue.

God's foreknowledge is not *for me*, but *for himself*. While I feel that grace which bringeth salvation and the sanctification of the Spirit in me, I am sealed for heaven—and where is the man who is forbidden to apply for the same blessing? They are quite mistaken who imagine themselves excluded by the divine prescience.

I can only know whether I am the choice of God, by God's being my choice, and by having

* See Introduction for Mr. Hill's general view of this subject.

the mark of my election in my regeneration, and the proof of my regeneration in the uprightness of my conduct. I do not desire to search into the divine decrees, but I want to see that the Saviour's image is engraven on the tablet of my renewed mind, in characters indelible as eternity.

Known unto God are all his ways from the beginning of the world ; it is ours to publish a general amnesty, and leave him to apply it. The Lord's purposes shall stand, but the secrets of them are his own prerogative.

Sin is the way to hell, and unless we are turned out of the way, we cannot but come to its end.

I do not ask *when* a man first believed in Christ, but does he *now* believe in him ? I do not desire to know *when* people were awakened, nor *how* they were awakened, unless they were awakened to go on living to God. I am not fond of the reverie stories that some tell about conversion, laying emphasis on *the hour when, and the place where*. I go not by instantaneous

impulses, but by the permanent effects of the holy mind of God created in the regenerate.

Man is nothing the better for redemption without regeneration. Do you expect no change from Christianity, though it is the most glorious revelation that ever saluted the ears of men? I expect it to alter me wonderfully, and to make me a surprise to myself and to all who see its glorious effects. I desire to have nothing in me, but what breathes more or less of the savour of regeneration, nor to have any faculty of my mind without some evidence of a divine transformation by the power of God upon it.

We know nothing effectually of the gospel, but by the power of its own nature upon our minds. If we have been made to feel the evil of sin, no one can persuade us that it is not an evil; and if the Holy Spirit has wrought in us a change of heart, no one can convince us that it is not a delightful reality.

When a seal is impressed upon wax, the impression leaves a certain proof that the seal has been there. God, by drawing nigh to his people, makes their souls as melting wax before

him, and then impresses his image on their minds, where it remains to evidence that they are born of his Spirit.

That man knows nothing of true conversion, who fancies it to be a change of sentiment, instead of a change of heart.

Conversion is nothing less than an entire change wrought in us by divine grace, whereby we as much differ from our former selves as light from darkness, or life from death. It is a total change. True religion is only made known to us by the Holy Ghost, verifying the strong expression, "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." We may write books on the divinity of our Lord, and on the doctrines of his gospel, but can know nothing of him experimentally, till he has made us partakers of that heavenly nature which brings us near to God.

We may tell whether our minds are changed or not, by noticing the effects produced by them on our bodily actions.

There is more than I can express, in the idea of having the mind in a proper frame before God. I desire to have my soul always in a state of holy waiting, ready to receive good whenever the Lord vouchsafes to communicate it.

I should always be in a right frame of mind, if these ideas were continually before me—I was created by God's power—I have been preserved by his omnipotence—I am redeemed by his precious blood.

Have I a religion within me that brings my mind into a heavenly frame, and makes me to be filled with God, giving me holiness and righteousness, which are the only fit ornaments for an immortal soul?

Tell me not of the enthusiasm of believers; but let us mark the enthusiasm of those who fancy the divine mind can be pleased with the mere outward forms of religion!

O for such a holy converse between God and my soul, that I cannot but lament all interruption!

I pray the Lord to watch over my faculties, and purify them, that the affections of love, joy, and peace, may awake into activity within me in a holy manner, and then I shall be blessed in them all. Peace will keep the whole in order, and Joy will be ever tuning his harp to the praises of my God and Saviour.

We are never in a better frame than when we find a holy panting for grace in the Lord Jesus Christ.

May God give me the blessings of a heavenly mind, and vouchsafe to me spiritual sensations, and then I shall go on in a holy and happy manner, whilst my hope of glory will be brightening from day to day.

When a man is in a wise state, he is always in a calm state.

What have I to do with feelings? Nothing, unless the Lord makes me the better for them.

I need no other assurance that I shall be in heaven hereafter, than the experience of heaven in me now.

If we are alive to God, we shall never be contented but as we keep on the heavenly journey. We must not suffer the doctrine of final perseverance to become the cradle of carnal security.

As long as I can put one foot before another, may I keep in Sion's paths, and those alone.

I believe if there be a walking hell upon earth, it is an apostate professor of religion.

A lady once said to me, "I cannot get comfort under your preaching, for you do not dwell upon *perseverance*." "Indeed," I replied, "I preach nothing but perseverance." "But I mean," she rejoined, "that perseverance which will keep me from falling." "Why," I answered, "that is a doctrine I dare not preach, for I can only prove my *perseverance* by my *persevering*. The promise of *final perseverance* is only made to those who *persevere*—'he that endureth to the end the same shall be saved.'"

We cannot tell who are the righteous, but as they remain steadfast to the end.

Holy anxiety against backsliding is the only grace that keeps me from backsliding.

A mere professor of religion is like a butterfly, all surface—if the breath of heaven breathe upon it, it is driven hither and thither ; but the Christian is like the dove, a strong pinioned bird. She may meet the thunderstorm in her course, but she is determined to persevere ; she will tack about, and tack about, and give even the winds and tempest to know that she has a nest—that it is her home—that her heart is there, and she must reach it.

SECTION X.

THE WORLD—PRIDE—CONSCIENCE—VIGILANCE.

CHILDREN who are fond of their play-things when at school, lay them aside as they advance in life—so there is a holy renunciation of the vanities of the world, when the mind is dignified by the grace of God.

If I never go any where, but as I expect God to go with me, I shall never go any where that is wrong.

Many professors of religion like a little of the world by stealth, which they conceal as smugglers do their contraband goods.

We are not to find fault with the world itself, which is God's creation, but only with those corruptions which have caused worldly people to apostatize from God.

Defiled as the world is, there are a few clean

paths for the children of God, who should pray to be kept in them every step they take.

The present world is called *night*, because it is full of darkness and dreaming.

There is no way of deliverance from the world, but as we are under the influence of that regenerating grace, which takes away the love of the world. Regeneration causes the separation.

Worldly craftiness seems to be the power or ability that belongs to superior folly. Cunning is a low sort of art, that is only fit to be employed in the degrading work of Satan. We do not call the devil *wise*, but *cunning*. The children of God are *wise*; every moment fresh wisdom is communicated to them, that they may "walk wisely towards them that are without."

Let us pursue our worldly business with a celestial mind, and the Lord will give us heavenly bread, while we are working for that which is earthly.

Those persons do incalculable injury to Christianity who want to lower it down to the carnal

standard. It is impossible to live in a state of holy union with the Lord, while we feel it pleasant to us to maintain a congenial fellowship with those who know him not. May I have no communion with those who prevent my intercourse with God.

The greatest dignity of my existence is to give up the world, as being beneath the affections of a new born soul.

I desire, while in the world, to go with the gospel stream, though a little one, for it runs into the ocean of eternal life.

I was asked not long ago to a splendid entertainment. I declined the invitation, because in such places I hear nothing profitable, and I desire to go nowhere except to get good or do good. I have evils enough within, without exposing myself to them without ; I have dangerous corruptions in my heart that may be kindled, and my chief aim is to keep them subdued.

Let me take care not to enter any path where I cannot, while walking therein, look up to God for direction.

We are not commanded to withdraw from the world like hermits. We should be courteous to all our friends and neighbours, and act as those who are of them in a natural point of view. But at the same time we must pray for the Spirit's guardian power to dwell in us, that we may remember the command to avoid the evil of the world, lest we be injured thereby.

When I first set out in the ministry, I began to preach in a very plain, boyish spirit, the glorious gospel of Christ. I had the prospect of worldly advantages before me, but I willingly gave them up for the sake of the truth, and I considered being made an instrument of converting one soul, the richest preferment upon earth.

It is astonishing what apologies *half*-Christians will make for those worldly inconsistencies, which would cover a true believer with the deepest humiliation.

When I became serious in my younger days, my worldly acquaintance gave me up. I was thankful for this, for it spared me the pain of giving them up.

The world is very much like the element that surrounds us, given to change. We have a mixture of calms and tempests, of sunshine and clouds, of cold and heat. Thus it is with the world ; but as every atmospheric change has its use, so God orders that every fluctuation of the things of time shall be for the eternal benefit of his people.

In this world we are to "have tribulation," when necessary. We are all as rough stones hewn out of nature's quarry, and troubles are made the instruments of polishing and preparing us for our places in the everlasting sanctuary. God often uses worldly trials to smooth and brighten us, till we reflect his glorious image, and not till then are we fit for the heavenly temple.

Pride is the coxcombry of ignorance.

The very evil that has made us vile has filled us with pride. Why, verily, the first archangel in heaven, with all his excellence, is still dependent for all he has. What creature can have his being, but from the fountain of all ex-

istence? The curse of man is, that he wants to live in a state of awful independence of God; and this creature, that is a debtor for every thing, would stand alone, think himself free from obligations, and even make God a debtor to him, claiming heaven for his own merits. This sin of pride is an enormous rebellion against God.

Let a man examine his thoughts but for one hour of the day, according to the standard of spiritual-mindedness, and heavenly-mindedness, and then be proud of himself if he can.

While the conscience is corrupt, like muddy water, the oftener it is disturbed the more polluted it will appear.

Every Christian that has a regenerate conscience consults it before God in his daily walk, that his practice may correspond with the glorious principle implanted in his bosom.

God never made a reasonable man, without some witness in himself that he ought to obey

his Maker. Hence it is that every one seems to know when he is in the wrong. Conscience will tell him this, if it tell him nothing further. Man knows he ought not to be as he is. Even heathens of old were aware that they were wrong, though they did not know how to be right.

The sweetest companion a man can have, is a holy, watchful, tender conscience.

May God give me a sanctified conscience, with his own pure word to guide it, and his Holy Spirit to enable me to value its directions, and then I shall be found walking in the road to everlasting happiness. The conscience I want, is a conscience testifying in me by the Holy Ghost.

May I live as though my safety depended upon myself, and yet give all the glory of it to God.

Though a watchful spirit will sometimes affect the mind with a sort of holy timidity, and I may be afraid that I am not right, when I perceive

so much in myself which is wrong ; yet, if under these feelings my heart is cast down, it will only drive me to the refuge.

When I enter a poor man's cottage, I generally find but few precautions taken for its safety ; but, in the jeweller's shop, I always observe strong fastenings. Things of value are preserved with care O what a solemn guard should I have over my own soul, that depository of the pearl of great price. The wise man has taught me a fine lesson—"keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

SECTION XI.

THE PROMISES—HUMILITY—THE WILL.

HOWEVER largely we may plead the promises of God, our expressions cannot reach the height and glory of them; and let us receive whatever we may, we shall experience that the more we have, the more there is yet behind for us to possess.

The promises are like the steps of a celestial ladder; and the stronger our faith, the higher we ascend by them.

The promises of God are sure *in themselves*, but I want to have them made sure *to me* in the course of my own actions. I will not decline to put on my armour, because I am certain of victory. I do not expect to conquer by the mere gift of the promise, because God has said I must "fight" if I would gain the mastery.

I do not know that I can have a better evidence of my being a holy person, than the ex-

perience that God's promises kindled a flame of sacred desire upon my heart, leading me to Christ for their fulfilment.

We never so effectually repel Satan's temptations as when we fasten on a gracious promise, and with it contend against him.

Christ's great promise is perfect security to the soul, while it rests upon him alone.

I shall never be otherwise than humble before God, if I am kept fully sensible that God has done all the good which is effected in me.

It is a blessed thing to stoop, when we do it to gather up spiritual manna for our souls.

Children of God, like lilies of the valley, flourish best in lowly situations.

Self-confidence destroys its thousands, but holy diffidence is a sure protection.

I believe a true Christian is more humbled on

account of his short comings as to duty after he believes, than on account of all the sins he committed before. It is not so much what I did in the days of my ignorance, as what I have done in the days of my light and knowledge, that lays me in the dust before the Lord.

If the poor weak child falls and cries for help, the anxious parent runs to lift it up and soothe it. So if we call on the Lord, under a humble sense of helplessness, and beg for divine support, we shall find the Father's arm under us, and receive supplies of strength equal to our day.

We are in the safe path during our pilgrim state, while we are in the valley of humiliation. There also the river of everlasting life divinely flows.

Wherever I have travelled, I could never judge of the height of any hill, but from the vale beneath. The height of God's eternal love is only to be discovered from the vale of humility.

Never was a man blessed with a will to be delivered from sin, but that deliverance was sure to come.

Blessed be God, the Holy Spirit, he is not only the eminent illuminator of the understanding, but the supreme manager of the will.

Never was there a saved sinner, who was not a willing saint.

God, by making us good, inclines us to do good, and afterwards gives his blessing on it.

Every man by nature has a free will, but it is a free will to sin. We can never possess a holy free will without free grace.

The graces of the spirit are commanding graces, and must be obeyed; but the believer willingly obeys them through the influence of their sovereign energy. Religion makes him one of God's "willing people in the day of his power."

SECTION XII.

THE LAW.

WHAT is the mould of the law? The mind of Christ.

God cannot be supposed to be the author of any but a perfect law. He can never alter his own eternal law; he cannot command less than that we love him with all our hearts, and souls, and strength. So stands the law, and so forever stands our obligation to it.

Unless we know the gospel, we can never comprehend the law.

The law of God, if I may thus express myself, is so *naturally* good, that it is impossible for a sinner to transgress it, without immediately feeling the effects of his disobedience.

Nothing will give us a stronger relish for the gospel, than the practical preaching of the law;

and I believe that they who lay the greatest stress on the beauty of holiness, the graces of holiness, and the end of holiness, are the people who will cry out most earnestly for Christ, and never be contented till he reigns in their hearts, and regulates their lives.

By regeneration I have a *capacity for receiving the mind of Christ*, and therefore the law of God is what I like. I see that it is excellently contrived to incline me to all that is wise, good, and profitable, and I give up my heart to God, that he may write it therein.

Let a man know himself, and know the law, and then trust to it for salvation if he can.

Nothing so much convinces me of the need of regeneration, as the strength of the holy commandments of God.

An antinomian is the greatest fool, and the most blasphemous fool in the world.

I can only find in the law, that we are mercifully ordered to make ourselves happy, by obeying that which will be to our own advantage.

The excellence of the law makes it the worst of criminality to disobey it.

If by the teaching of the Holy Ghost we are initiated into the purity of God's law, we never can be contented without an interest in Christ's salvation.

Do I want to be delivered from obedience to the law? No, for it would be an eternal hell to be delivered from the necessity of loving God. The blessed angels above could never admire such a redemption as that; it would be quite contrary to the nature of the divine perfections. For what purpose did Christ die for us?—this passage is enough to make antinomianism sink into its proper nothingness—"that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works."*

If I have grace in my heart, I shall have no need of a string of morals to bind upon my forehead, for, by an intuitive principle within, I shall see that all God's commands are lovely and good.

Great honour is given to the law in the first

* Tit. ii. 4.

introduction of the gospel. John the Baptist was sent to denounce transgressors of it ; his words were, " the axe is laid unto the root of the trees ; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire." In such language did Christ's forerunner preach and vindicate his holy law. Next let us observe the preaching of our Lord himself. If we read his sermon on the mount with holy caution, we shall see how strongly he condemns those, who made void the precepts of the law by their transgressions. St. Paul likewise manifests great zeal for the law, and describes its high demands. Where, in the New Testament, can we find a single word that should lead us to suppose ourselves less debtors to the law, because Christ became our ransom? He pardons the criminal, he has paid the debt, but he does not abrogate the law. Nay, how he " magnified " it, by himself becoming a perfect example of obedience.

With what wisdom does our Lord Jesus Christ, the God of wisdom, abridge, and yet at the same time impart fresh splendour to the law, when he sums it all up in the command to love God with all our hearts, and our neighbour as ourselves.

I can never love the law of God, unless the "love of God is shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost." Without this I must hate the lovely command, and be equally dissatisfied both with the legal and gospel dispensations, because they each point to the restoration of primitive obedience.

The captive bird that is let loose from its cage, will return to it again, after roaming a little while, because therein it finds its safety and its comfort. So, when set at liberty by the gospel, I desire not to be freed from the law; surrounded by the barrier of its holy precepts, I find myself pleasantly enclosed.

I cannot believe in the purity of the Father's law, without desiring to obey it, and mourning that I am a transgressor of it. I never can come to Christ with a broken and contrite heart, nor see the glory of that righteousness which is wrought out for me by him, till I am impressed with a sense of the exceeding defectiveness of my own righteousness, and of the grief I ought to feel at the short comings of my obedience to God's commands.

Every command, however strongly given, and whatever may be our inability to obey it, should rather encourage us than otherwise ; for it never would have been left in the bible, if God were not ready to impart power to observe it to his glory. There is nothing laid down as a duty, but grace is promised to enable us to perform it.

I abhor that antinomian whitewashing—that *if we obey the law as well as we can*, this is all that will be required of us. When a man says he does as well as he can, who credits it? I question whether I should find throughout my life, that moment when I could say I did any action as well as I could. Alas for me, I feel that there is not an instant in which I am not acting in a defective manner.

A legalist hears the command, and looks to himself for strength to obey it. An obedient believer looks at the command by faith, and to God for strength.

All the faculties of the rightly governed soul, stand obediently waiting to receive the command to obey.

I do not expect to be saved by the rule, but if I am saved, I shall be ruled. One great glory of God is that regenerating power, whereby man is restored and rendered obedient.

God cannot want my obedience; but every command he gives me, if I obey it, makes me happy. It is my pleasure to obey; not to merit by what I do, but to prove my love to him, who has merited all things for me, and bids me find my heaven in his service.

I am not to suppose because God has given me commands, that I am able to obey them without the assistance of his grace. I bless God for the command, because it brings me to him for grace to perform it.

I defy any one to find a single command in the bible, which is not beneficial to him who obeys it.

Though I cannot by my good works obliterate my bad works, or pay what I owe to the law by any thing I can do, yet thanks be to God, I can in some little measure render to him according to the blessings he has given me. Has he given

me eyes? I would be directed by them, to walk in the paths of holiness. Has he given me feet? Then I will run in the way of his commandments. Has he given me a mind? Then I will use it to his glory.

A person remarked to a truly converted Christian, "I hope you will not lay aside your once favourite book—*The whole duty of man.*" The reply was, "No, but I need not keep it in my pocket, for I trust I have it written on my heart."

I love my bible in its commands, as well as in its promises. I do not need it merely to tell me that sin may be pardoned, but I want it to tell me how my conduct should be regulated.

God be praised that I must have his presence in my soul, if ever I serve him according to his holy law.

I once heard an antinomian say, the law was no rule of life to believers, and I silenced him by asking, which of the commandments he wanted to get rid of.

I know I am pardoned only through the blood

of Christ, and I am now seeking the effect of pardon—grace to live obediently to his glory.

Angels cannot possess a higher privilege than permission to execute the commands of God.

The law not only condemns what is wrong in the eyes of men, but such things as are sinful in the sight of a heart-searching God. Thus it teaches, that an evil thought, though not brought into action, is sin. By this I learn, that I must please God in the spirit of my mind. An unregenerate man may do a good deed, but not with a motive which renders it acceptable to God.

I should be like Pharaoh who commanded Israel to make bricks without straw, if I taught my hearers to give obedience to God's law, without his grace upon their hearts.

SECTION XIII.

THE SABBATH—THE SACRAMENT.

I NEVER visit truly pious persons confined by sickness, who do not universally say, that the loss of sabbath worship in the house of God, is one of the greatest trials their affliction brings upon them.

When laws are but obscurely revealed, the transgressor may have some pretext for the violation of them; but surely the plain quotation of the fourth command, must leave the sinner without excuse. “*Remember* that thou keep holy the sabbath day. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do; but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt do no manner of work, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, thy man-servant and thy maid-servant, thy cattle, and the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven, and earth, the sea, and

all that in them is, and rested the seventh day, wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day and hallowed it." What comment can be needed on expressions so explicit as these? Though this commandment stands last of the first table of duties, yet from its importance, it demands our most serious attention. While some have concluded erroneously, that it is only to be considered as part of the Mosaic dispensation, we find it throughout the volume of sacred writ, more or less practised and enjoined. If there be a God to be worshipped, and his sacred name is to be solemnly revered according to the *third* command, of what avail could all this be, if there was not a specific time announced for the adoption of such worship? Do not matters of fact also prove the truth, that wherever the sabbath is openly violated, immorality is more or less sure to abound, while ignorance and depravity hover over the human mind, introducing that long train of evils, so fatal to the good of society, and injurious to the souls of men?

Blessed be God for the command that one day in seven, is to be a day of dedication of ourselves, our time, and our services, entirely to him. We ~~must~~ must recollect, however, that we can keep no

day holy, without the assistance of God's Holy Spirit. We shall not be the better for being in holy places, unless we are in a holy frame. The great preparatory work on the Lord's day, is to seek to be under the influence of a spiritual mind.

The sanctuary of God is the banqueting house of the regenerate soul. There the believer partakes of heavenly provision, which so enriches his graces, and increases his hopes, that, he goes home saying, "Blessed be God for my sabbath privileges, I would not be deprived of them for the world."

The cruelty and injustice of the sabbath-breaker is fully equal to his profaneness. It is cruel to the dumb creation, and to all dependent on us, to deprive them of that rest which is their right by God's command; and it is unjust to permit ungodly traffic to be carried on during the Lord's day, to the injury and offence of conscientious observers of the laws of God and man. Hence if Christianity is a part of the law of our land, the civil magistrate ought to interfere, in enforcing external respect to the sacred day of rest.

I once heard a sanctimonious shopkeeper say, that he had hard work to get rid of his Sunday customers in time for divine service. He began with Satan, and then pretended to end with God! The true Christian dares not sin for the sake of gain.

I desire to rise on the sabbath morning with solemn feelings. It is my day of rest; the day also on which my mind should be enriched. I not only would put on my spiritual apparel, but would begin with private prayer before I enter God's house. When there, I would seek to be impressed with the idea that the Lord is immediately present with me. I must enter the sanctuary adorned with my celestial graces, and call forth all my affections, and have faith in full exercise. I must plead God's promises, and strive not to depart without having obtained something.

Not only was the divine Being the first to *command*, but He was the first to *keep* the sabbath. Whilst we cannot comprehend what this resting on the part of God can mean, yet at the same time, it solemnly leads us to consider

the blessings we may enjoy, when we seek that rest in him which we can find no where else.

Though from the very first there was a day of rest, yet, while Israel was in Egypt, the poor captives were probably deprived of its enjoyment. But when the time of deliverance came, there was nothing more solemnly enacted than the revival of this sacred duty.

We must not keep the sabbath merely in a *negative* manner, by simple abstinence from ordinary business, but we must strive to enter into the spirit of that holy rest which sweetly refreshes the soul. We are to abstain from bodily labour, that we may get into spiritual labour for the things of God. He tells us to lay the things of time and sense aside, to leave them all and draw near to him, that we may partake of that "bread which cometh down from heaven," and anticipate what heaven is, by entering his sanctuary and enjoying his presence there.

An eminently pious tradesman whom I knew used to say, "Blessed be God, when I rise on the Monday, I can get up with less worldly-

mindfulness, but by the time Saturday comes, I seem to have laboured so long in the world, that I begin to enter too much into its spirit and customs, and then how glad I am to see my darkened warehouse on the sabbath morning, that I may go to that dear place where my God meets his people." Though there is but one day in which we can particularly serve God, yet it is through the strength of that day that we are properly kept all other days.

We may shut an unregenerate man out from all carnal company on the sabbath day; we may keep him in the house of God as in a place of confinement, but while the believer delights in such restraint, it will be a loathsome yoke to the other. He can have no pleasure in the presence of God, for there is nothing in him by which he can anticipate it. We cannot enjoy the Lord's day, but as we enjoy it in connection with the Lord spiritually. To this end, we must first conceive of the "rest that remaineth for the people of God," and find a holy satisfaction in sitting under the shadow of his wings.

Though the sabbath day is a sacred rest *with* God, it is impossible to enjoy it rightly, till we

find it to be a day of rest *in* God. We want the Holy Spirit, whilst attending on the holy ordinances, to convince us of the awful fact, that we can never benefit by them, till delivered from the evil effects of sin upon the mind. We must have a principle implanted in us, that cannot bear the slightest touch of sin, without infinite pain and perplexity. When a man struggles with sin, and cries out, "how shall I be freed from the bondage of corruption?" though he appears to be propelled as in a storm, yet the effect is to dissipate the clouds that hang over him, and to create for him a bright and glorious day of rest in God.

Some, who know nothing of God say, "O the burden of these sabbath duties!" Certainly, if I carry a burden, I am not at rest, and cannot enjoy myself; but God be praised, the burden I feel is sin, and not his blissful-service. My sorrow, is that when I am in the Lord's temple, I cannot serve him as I desire; I am grieved that any interruption should meet me in the midst of the privileges I would fain enjoy.

I am shocked when I look around this land; it is grievous to behold the bright sun shining

on the sabbath, and to see thousands idling away their time in wrong pursuits, transgressing against the Lord by their wanton breach of his commands. O that the great and wealthy did but understand the mischief they do to society at large, by not attending to those laws which are for its best interests. No social compact can go on well, but as men live under the influence of the Lord's presence. Let man be given up to his depraved lusts and passions and we shall soon find what a wretched creature he will become. We never can be comfortable together as human beings, but as we are guided by divine grace. Leave people to themselves without religious restraint, and mischief and confusion will speedily overflow the nation.

Let me be taught my way to heaven by my sabbath day's exercises, till at length, having done serving my God below, I am brought beyond all that molests my mind and interferes with my rest in time, to enjoy him eternally in the everlasting rest above.

There is one thing I feel perpetually, and I lament that I cannot feel it more—the exceeding importance to a minister of the sabbath day.

What should be my state of mind, that my hearers may value the sacred day? We can never make good music with an ill-tuned instrument. Ministers ought to pray for a heavenly frame, that the minds of the people may be kept in a heavenly frame also.

Some persons think to save themselves by coming to the Lord's table, conceiving that the sacrament is a sort of charm to bring salvation down to them, whereas it is intended as a seal to those who are saved.

Let those who do not attend the sacrament, ask themselves *why*? and let that little word be answered by a contrary conduct.

Those that dare not approach the altar dare still go on in sin!

The same state of mind which keeps a man from the Lord's table will most assuredly keep him out of heaven.

SECTION XIV.

CHRISTIAN CHARACTER AND DEPORTMENT.—ZEAL.

WHAT do I see, when I fix my eyes upon the man who is truly blest with the grace of God? He has the "same mind" that was also in Christ Jesus; he is kept in heavenly serenity in this his earthly state; he partakes of those purifying influences in time, which are foretastes of perfect holiness when time shall be no more; an earnest of the glorious inheritance dwells in him by the Holy Ghost, and he brings forth fruit in his life. Religion would be the worst of idle tales, if it were only a creed in the head without affecting the heart and life.

If "one Spirit" from God himself actuate my whole man, I shall not have my right hand at variance with my left.

Let a man live as a Christian ought to live, and he need not fear to trust his character to the Lord's protection.

I have often observed that while the chaff is being winnowed from the wheat, there is never more than a very little irregular movement in the descent of the grain. Sometimes a child of God may be shaken by a strong temptation, but he soon returns to his steady course, and will keep up an undeviating consistency of character, that he may not appear to go among "the chaff."

What wisdom and piety do men need to become exemplary heads of large families; to behave as if conscious of God's presence in their homes, and to walk before their children and dependents like priests in the midst of them.

Is it really possible that persons without grace may sometimes act with more propriety than those who have a knowledge of the truth! Shall it be said, that men of the world have been known to show better tempers than some who are "called to be saints!" Can this indeed be so! O that the consistency of our lives may prove that God is in us, and that our religion is the finest reality that can be communicated to the heart.

Will a man, who is careless of his character,

call himself a believer in the power of holiness, when he practically rejects it !

O what madness for a man to dream of heaven, when every step he takes, is in the road which leads to hell.

How do I use the outward faculties of speaking, hearing, seeing? Do I, according to the spirit created in me, take care that they are regulated, as they ought to be regulated, by the mind of God ?

Whoever has a little more piety than common, is certain to be branded with a nick-name ; but if we give practical evidence of the grandeur of holiness, it will soon appear that "wisdom is justified of all her children." If we avoid being a disgrace to religion, religion will never be a disgrace to us. I often think of the command "by patient continuance in well doing to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men"*—let us so act that the world may be silenced by our conduct.

I have known few wiser men than good Mr. Newton. I once observed to him that I consi-

* Pet. ii. 15.

dered a certain individual to be a very good man. He made scarcely any reply, so I inquired if he had heard something wrong of him. He merely answered, "*I never lived at home with him.*" Let a Christian's character be such that those cannot fail to admire it, who live with him in his home.

True religion so bespeaks itself to be of God, that all the infidelity of the human heart cannot deny its divine origin. It manifests this by the power, dignity, and loveliness of the Christian character.

Every transaction should be conducted in the fear of God. In all our occupations we should touch nothing but with a holy hand.

Though a Christian does not desire to exhibit what he is in an ostentatious manner, yet as the sun cannot help its brightness, and as the stars are unable to keep back their lustre, so likewise the child of God must shine.

It was a favourite prayer with good old Mr. Berridge, that he might be conducted "safely and honourably through the world."

We cannot be too careful to see that there are no flaws in our Christian character, for Satan is always watching an opportunity to thrust his wedge into the crevices of our profession.

The greatest enemies of Christianity, are those who make a blazing profession without a steady shining conduct.

If I have not both internal and external evidence that I am right, my confidence is presumption.

There is an authority in Christian consistency, which will be more or less revered wherever it is found.

How many grievous wounds do we inflict on ourselves, by not properly carrying our arms !

The believer must be like Aaron's rod that budded. What was this rod? only a poor dead stick. While the other withered rods were laid before the ark they continued withered still, but his stood up, and budded and blossomed. So, if we would know whether the Lord's reviving work proceeds in us, we must observe whether we arise, and bud and blossom to his glory.

It is delightful to observe in the true Christian character, how wisdom and simplicity, courage and humility, go hand in hand and act together.

No man can act wisely, till the Lord has made him good ; and no man can demean himself like a fool, if he is blest with that grace which delivers him from all folly.

It is a great matter to have our religious conversation deserve the name of religious conversation.

True piety is not a morose, but a cheerful thing ; whilst it makes me joyful it delivers me from frivolity, yet it causes me to be pleasant and glad.

While I am cheerfully holy, God forbid that I should forget to pray that I may be spiritually holy.

Every true child of God would rather die in the road, than yield to temptation in the road.

I do not expect to find perfection, but I do expect to find that uprightness in the Christian, which will not let him live in a single known sin for a thousand worlds.

AND DEPORTMENT

When I consider that God graciously assumes the direction of my faculties, and by regeneration erects his throne in my soul—that he purifies my appetites, enriches my understanding, operates on my will, and sways his sceptre over all my powers in a way becoming his own righteousness, may nothing prevail on me to disgrace my high calling, for I am concerned for the reputation of a heavenly mind.

A man who lacks zeal for God, must be without love to God, and lives as the devil would wish him to live.

How can it be possible for God to live in me, and I not live to God?

When zeal comes forth, may meekness walk with it on one hand, and wisdom on the other, and then it will be well conducted.

I remember asking an aged and infirm female, who had constantly to walk three or four miles on an errand of duty, how she could possibly go through such fatigue. Her reply was, "my heart goes before, and my body must follow

after." A zealous heart will surmount almost every obstacle.

It is not the station that we fill which is of importance, so much as the light we send forth from it. Thanks be to God, we may glorify him in our several spheres more than we perhaps imagine. There is no condition, however humble, which precludes the zealous Christian from doing something to the honour and praise of his God.

How little do we feel the grandeur of that excellent zeal which so exalts the character of man, that "whether he eats or drinks or whatever he does, he does all to the glory of God." All my exertions should be directed towards him. Isaac Andrews concluded all his writings with the expression, "*glory to God alone.*" May I inscribe the same upon my every action.

I should be ashamed of having lived so long, if I had not laboured zealously for the Lord.

SECTION XV.

MERCY—SPIRITUAL POVERTY—DOUBTS.

I FLY as a sinner to my Saviour; I believe that he is able and willing to "save to the uttermost" all that come to God for mercy through him, and I therefore place my ruined soul in his gracious hand. I recognize the voice of the gospel and realize its offers. I know that the Lord would never have blessed me with a contrite sense of my need of his mercy, unless he had designed to make me an object of it. Hence I approach the "Lamb of God" as an humble penitent, convinced that his atonement has reconciled me to the Father, and enjoying the comfort of his promise, "whosoever cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." His precious death is my all-sufficient plea, and having faith in him, I rejoice in the hope of mercy, "with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

The instant a man longs for mercy, he may find it.

What can a God of mercy say more to us, than he has already promised to every returning penitent ?

I say to the sinner, "God be praised, thou art yet on mercy's ground. Directly thou art enabled by grace to cast down the arms of thy rebellion, as soon as heartfelt repentance has duly visited thy mind, and thou yieldest thyself up to the Lord, his tender compassion will be exhibited before thee, and he who saves to the uttermost, will never reject any soul that cries for mercy through 'the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.' "

When the Lord says, "come unto me," I leave a world of sin behind ; I spring into the arms of infinite mercy and rejoice in it with supreme delight.

Unless my God have mercy upon my infirmities, I shall undo myself in the very performance of my duties.

Thanks be to God for the sweet word *Mercy* ; I would not part with it for innumerable worlds.

The door of mercy is closed to none but those who shut it against themselves.

Holy poverty is heavenly riches.

We look most effectually to the Lord, when we feel ourselves helpless and empty.

God enriches our hearts with countless blessings, and thus teaches us that inexhaustible treasures are laid up for believers in Christ Jesus; but let me be ever so much enriched to-day, I shall still praise the Lord if I feel my poverty to-morrow.

I can never give God *all* the glory, till I see that in myself dwelleth no good thing.

Whatever pertains to true religion, comes to us while humbled under a sense of our spiritual poverty.

There is no contradiction in the assertion, that we may fear and yet be bold; that we may fight with holy apprehension of being vanquished, and yet fight in the strength of him who has promised never to "leave nor forsake" us.

I do not doubt the design of God to save his people, but my doubt is sometimes, whether I am really of their number—whether there is that genuine evidence of grace in my heart, which enables me to say in full assurance of faith, “my beloved is mine and I am his.”

I never knew a man of a brighter mind than the poet Cowper. Yet he had an idea, as contrary to truth as possible, that he was rejected of God. No man ever possessed a more lovely, Christian spirit, or more earnestly desired to be like his Saviour. But he was overwhelmed by the notion, that though he would come to Christ, he could not. O how great must have been his surprise when heaven opened to his departed spirit, when Jesus smiled his tears away, and when he heard the blessed words, “enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

The evidence of Christians is generally clouded by trifling.

Could I but see more of the mind of God *in* me, it would remove all doubts as to his mind *towards* me.

SECTION XVI.

G O D .

I CANNOT comprehend an infinite God, yet I can form no idea of a God that is not infinite.

As well might I stretch out my hand, and try to touch the heavens above; as well might I attempt to walk upon the sea, and measure its depths, as endeavour to fathom those deep things of God which pass all understanding. The highest angel in heaven would be *over-blessed*, if God were to bless him with all the knowledge of divine perfections which he could communicate.

Before I can be happy in God, I must have that knowledge of his attributes brought home to my mind whereby I can so delight in his goodness and excellency, as to say with the psalmist, "Thou, O God, art the thing that I long for."

Let us not inquire *where* God is in the regions above, but whether we can recognize his presence in our families, in our churches, in our hearts.

Millions of thoughts have I had in my mind, which I have forgotten; but God never forgets one single thought of all the intelligent beings he ever created.

There is but one, and there can be but one independently holy Being, and this is the infinitely holy God. All the angels are, and will ever be holy *from* God; no creature has in himself *essential* holiness; it is all of divine communication.

I desire to have (Lord keep me in it) that solemn thought, that God is here. I know that heaven cannot be the only place in which he dwells; wherever I am, there he surrounds me. I would fain be filled with a sense of the majesty of a present God—I want to remember that I am compassed about by Thee, O king of saints! Under this impression, how should I feel in prayer; how should I feel in reading the word of life; how should I feel when I have immor-

tal souls to deal with ! With what seriousness should I then perform every religious duty !

I have within me a soul that is a spark of immortality ; though it has lost its holiness by sin, it is I trust in a measure recovered by my being made “a new creature” in Christ Jesus, whence I become the object of my God’s delight, the thought of which makes me rejoice in the conviction of his omnipresence. “He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous,”*—and if his eyes are fixed upon me, all his other glorious attributes are engaged for me. He views me not by his omnipotence, but since he beholds me, I am the object of omnipotent power for my benefit. The *All-seeing* God is the *Almighty* God ! Who can discover what is included in the word *Almighty* ! I could as easily embrace the universe, as I could scan the incomprehensible might of God. If, then, he is *omnipotent* as well as *omnipresent*, I shall be made “mighty through God,” by receiving a portion of eternal strength ! Here I am wafted into Deity—God is the glorious element of my existence—I feel the grandeur of the idea, “in him, we live and move and have our being.”

* Job xxxvi. 7.

Sin prevails against man, because he "sets not God always before him." What a different world would this be, if we were but desirous to experience that the great and glorious Being who fills the vast expanse above, blesses us with his presence in our hearts, bringing home to us the truth of the expression, "the tabernacle of God is with men."

How hateful to the divine majesty must be that natural atheism of the human mind, which puts God out of sight, and makes many say with the fool, "tush, there is no God." What does St. Paul mean, when he speaks of those who are "without God in the world?" He means that they are practical *atheists*, a word which signifies *without God*—and how awfully do such characters abound!

I want to bear in my mind, that although God is that infinitely majestic Being before whom millions of worlds must tremble, he is at the same time so gently condescending, that the meanest believer in Christ may draw near to him. What a sweet illustration we have of this, in the first words of the Lord's prayer—*Our Father!*

God takes pleasure in his angels, and in the "spirits of just men made perfect;" he also rejoices in himself, on account of the infinite blessedness belonging to his own eternal existence; but he even delights in his saints on earth, for he has communicated the divine image to them. To the poorest and the feeblest of his servants, though bowed down by a sense of infirmities and failings, he will give the gracious welcome, "enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

It is impossible for our little minds to form any thing like a just idea of the infinity of God. Let centuries roll on after centuries, and ages after ages; let as many millions of years pass away as there are sands on the sea-shore; let us continue numbering till lost in calculation, and then we could approximate no nearer to the extent of an eternal existence! Thus limited are all our conceptions of the attributes of God; we can form no comprehensive notion of them. O what a solemn subject, the infinity of God! My own existence, though but an atom, is beyond my conception, who then can "by searching find out God!"

As a Christian, I am not to dread God as an

angry judge, nor to fear him as the avenger of sin, but to love him as my reconciled Father. While freed from the fear that terrifies, I would fain live in the fear which causes me to regard God with reverential awe, though I love him with holy fervour.

There is not an interval of space unoccupied by God; the universe is his glorious temple! O to find him ever near us, reigning in our hearts, and swaying his sovereign sceptre over all that pertains to us!

I can conceive that Adam, rejoicing in converse with his God, thus spoke to himself in paradise—"How glorious are all things before me! The beauteous flowers surround me with their exhilarating perfumes! What grandeur and what loveliness meet together here! What indulgence for my senses, what gratification for my taste! Now comes the little bird; without the least fear he perches by me. How brilliant his plumage, how elegant his form! Whence came he to exist?" Thus he saw, he wondered, he adored. He beheld the morning sun ascending in its glory from the eastern world, and in the evening was refreshed by fertilizing dews,

the only rain that then watered the blissful garden. He was surprised! "What an abode of glory am I placed in; what happiness is before me! I hear the voice of animated nature; it gratefully salutes my ear; 't is music from my Creator! I am a marvel to myself; I govern all around me, and my hand supplies my every need. I am a blessed creature—how bright, how invigorating the air I breathe; how various are my enjoyments; but lo! this is the chief of all my bliss, I have frequent visits from my God."

SECTION XVII.

THE HOLY GHOST—THE TRINITY.

I PRAY that I may be enabled to look as much to God the Holy Ghost for sanctification, as I do through faith, to God the Son, my Redeemer, for pardon and justification.

Some venture to call the Holy Spirit only an *emanation*; but I believe him to be God, because he gives divine life to the “dead in trespasses and sins;” and believers are called in the bible, “temples of the Holy Ghost.”

There is no holy breathing after God in any, but those into whom there has been breathed the genuine inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

I believe that God the Holy Ghost can give me a holy spiritual mind, and stupid as I am by nature, can enable me to understand the dispen-

sation of the gospel, by the power of his gracious teaching.

I pray that it may be my work until death, to preach upon the influence of God the Holy Spirit on the Church of Christ.

I love to preach upon the doctrine of the Trinity, because it gives us a fine, simple conception of the gospel. It teaches us to set forth the excellence of the Father's love, the riches of the Son's redemption, and the wondrous nature of the Holy Spirit's work in the Christian's heart.

In speaking of the doctrine of the Trinity, our language ought to be very guarded. We should keep close to scriptural expressions.

All the riches of divine grace are treasured up in the mutual relations of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

By union with God in Christ Jesus, believers become "one" in God the Father respecting

his law—in God the Son respecting his redemption—in God the Holy Spirit respecting his sanctifying influence.

This is what we call Trinity Sunday,* (May 25th, 1823.) We are reminded hereby to consider with holy caution, as far as it is revealed to us, the nature of His divine existence “in whom we live and move and have our being.” This is a mystery which can never be understood. Here human reason fails, and revelation becomes our only guide. Proud man, when he attempts to be wise above that which is written, is sure to have his wisdom turned into folly. Do you understand the nature of your own existence? Can you tell me how body and spirit are most curiously united? I have sometimes asked if you can explain what life is? This you may attempt to answer by reference to the actions of life, but what life is in itself you cannot tell. If then I cannot comprehend myself, how can I expect to comprehend Him who is infinitely incomprehensible! I therefore only go as I am guided; and my prayer is that I may be guided into all truth by the Spirit of

*The following paragraph was the substance of the opening of Mr. Hill's sermon on that day. His text was 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

truth. I say quite enough, when I assert that the doctrine of the Trinity is most decidedly stated in the word of God. We are initiated into the Christian dispensation by baptism; and what did our Lord command his disciples? They were to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit. We are sure that we adore the Trinity when we truly adore the Unity—and

“Where reason fails with all her powers,
There faith prevails and love adores.”

We believe this mystery because it is made known to us by God, and have no doubt of what is so gloriously revealed. It struck me when the lesson* was read in the morning service, how clearly this doctrine was contained in it. “Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water, and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God de-

* Matt. iii.

scending like a dove and abiding upon him. And lo, a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Now what can we have more distinct than this? Jesus was the person baptized; the Spirit descended upon him; and God the Father spoke from his throne of glory, and said, "this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Again, what a wonderfully striking passage is this*—"if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh,"—now mark how plainly three persons are mentioned in covenant with us—"how much more shall the blood of *Christ*, who through the *eternal Spirit*, offered himself without spot to *God*, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Thus hath the triune Jehovah revealed himself to man.

I am not to controvert this doctrine by asking whether it is consistent with reason. What do poor worms mean by *reason*? Reason may assist us to climb from one truth to another, but if we miss only a single step, all our after-reckonings are wrong.

* Heb. ix. 13, 14.

Who can tell the high privilege of living under a gospel dispensation? Who can describe what the eye of faith beholds, when it sees the glory of God the Father beaming through the Son, and manifested to the heart by the Holy Spirit?

SECTION XVIII.

P R O V I D E N C E—T I M E.

No providence is a blank; whatever occurs, I may get some good from it. I would desire to understand every outward dispensation, and as far as possible to comprehend its meaning.

I once saw the parent of a lovely family approach his children with a basket of fine fruits, which he held up for them to reach. They were obliged to leap for them, but at length the indulgent father let down his hand and gave them the prize. Thus our heavenly Father holds his blessings at a distance to try us; but we need not fear the result, for if we look to him in earnest, he will in due time lower his hand, and give us "far more abundantly than we can either ask or think."

I am to watch the leadings of God's providence with a careful eye, and if I am brought

into difficult paths, it is his promise that he will guide me safely through.

When mountains are in the way of the Lord's people, he does not permit them to ascend and pass over their summits, but he bids the mountains give way. *He will not suffer his saints to walk too high*; therefore in his providence he reduces the hills to vales, which are pleasant and safe to humble pilgrims.

How graciously the Lord says to me (I wonder at his condescension as well as his wisdom) "the very hairs of thy head are all numbered." His eye is infinitely over me. He cares particularly for me! The children of the best earthly parent may be in danger, because he cannot have them always in his sight. Not so the children of the omnipresent God!—his "eyes are over the righteous" always, and his loving mercy never fails.

There are some things in the unsearchable providence of God, the depths of which we cannot fathom, but they are right nevertheless.

I desire to be content in the station which

The Lord has assigned to me. I recollect meeting with the shoot of a very pretty tree, which I thought to plant in a rich earth, but I was told it would only blossom in a barren soil, and I found upon trial that this was most suitable to its nature. Thus God best knows where his people are most likely to flourish, and places them according to his own wisdom.

I want to feel myself an accountable creature to God for every moment of my time, and desire not to have a word or a thought, which does not more or less prove that I am spending it to his praise.

I have nothing to do with to-morrow. Let to-morrow's temptations come, and I will fly to Christ for strength to overcome them. Let me fight my battles to-day.

If any man desires to see the benefit of religion, let him observe how those spend their precious time who have no religion.

My time is the Lord's. I would always be

trying to put a stone into the walls of God's holy temple.

The most dishonourable service in the world, is spending our time upon ourselves.

Delays are not only dangerous, but sometimes awfully damnable.

There is not an error more blasphemous, than the notion that a man can command repentance at any future day he pleases.

I shudder at the thought of delaying one moment, to commit my soul to the gracious keeping of my Redeemer.

We should not so much concern ourselves with inquiring what we are to be in the next world; as with the question, what ought we to be in the present?

Time may be redeemed as it is passing, but never when it is gone by.

Sometimes when I wake in a morning, I am struck with the uncertainty of what may take

place during the coming day. We know nothing beforehand ; all future events are shrouded in darkness, that we may live every instant solemnly dependent upon God.

The church of Christ in time is the school for heaven, and if we are not tutored in it now, we shall not be fit for future happiness in another world.

I this moment live—may my life this moment be dedicated to my God.

It seemed to me before I was born again, that my time was my own, and that I might fill it up as I chose ; but directly the divine change took place in me, I saw that time was given for eternity, and that it was my duty to spend it for my everlasting profit.

It requires no slight degree of wisdom and grace, to know how much we should admire and enjoy of the things of time.

To look up to God—to mark the providence of God—to meditate on the word of God, are my three chief duties in time.

It is a good rule never to occupy ourselves in any thing in time, which necessarily excludes serious thoughts of eternity.

The little new-born infant just ushered into existence, will soon be hurried through time, and launched into eternity. "Our fathers, where are they?" I know that "it is appointed unto all men once to die, and after death the judgment." Would to God every duty of my life were as wisely spent, as I should wish my last day to be spent. O what awful procrastination does the arch-enemy preach to the souls of men—"you may leave serious matters a little longer, and indulge your own lusts for a while!" What! can we persuade God to let us live one moment beyond our appointed time? The language of the awful procrastination of thousands, is nothing less than this—"We will serve Satan as long as we can, and give the Lord as little as possible of our remaining strength."

When I consider the long life I have already spent upon earth, I think what a little time must be remaining to me; and I grieve that I have not done more good. It should be our business to improve every minute as it flies. What

a good command (I am struck with its wisdom) to "redeem the time because the days are evil." The only way to avoid evil, is to fill up every passing hour to the glory of God.

How impressive is the solemn progress of time! I am rapidly advancing through it, and its course must continue till the instant when I am hurled into eternity! O what a thought is this!—in a short period every hardened sinner must sink into the pit, whence he can escape no more!

I heard of a very old man like myself, who was asked what his age was; he answered, "the *right side* of eighty." "I thought you were *more than eighty*," said the inquirer. "Yes, I am beyond it," he replied, "and that is the *right side*, for I am the nearer to my eternal rest."

SECTION XIX.

DEATH.

EVERY time I breathe, I am brought nearer to that solemn period when I must breathe out my soul into the presence of my God. — What a wise precaution, “prepare to meet thy God!” — what words of excellent direction, “be ye also ready.” Is the way difficult? “Yes, but only because our corruptions make it so. In itself it is good and delightful; its “ways are ways of pleasantness,” its “paths are peace;” but we are crippled by our own sinfulness, and, notwithstanding the excellence of the road, we walk ill in it. On the right hand and on the left are innumerable snares and dangers. O, what a miracle of mercy shall I be, if I “die in the Lord,” saved by his grace. I love my God for his wise and loving admonitions — “fight the good fight of faith” — “give all diligence to make your calling and election sure” — “strive to enter in at the strait gate” — “so run that ye

may obtain." All these counsels demand our incessant attention, and prove that we need more than mortal strength to pass through a world of perils, with a prospect of realizing in death "the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls."

Little sparks of existence as we are *before* God, what a mercy to have our existence *in* God. I want to be surprised at the vast importance of my own existence, because I live for eternity. This soul of mine, though my body must die, will never have a moment's suspension of its being. Let me then "consider my latter end," and be wise for eternity.

I seldom come to the conclusion of a week, but my mind is struck with the rapidity with which it has flown. Quickly has it been told up, but it can never be told again. I am hastening towards eternity as fast as time can carry me. O how foolish to be engrossed by the world, when I have a precious soul so worthy of my deep regard. If the thought of dying were oftener before us, sinful things would lose their deceitful influence.

It is encouraging, when departing Christians can utter a few profitable words from their bed of sickness; but it is not so much what they say then, as what they formerly were, which makes the impression. Some persons whispered behind the curtains of the dying bed of Mr. Walker, of Truro, "what an excellent Christian he is." He heard them, and cried out, "I am still a sinner hoping to be saved, while I trust I am saved; but I need to be watching and praying to the last moment."

I desire always to be in that frame which disarms death, and makes me look upon it only as a flight into the arms of my Redeemer.

It is a privilege which none but true believers can ever enjoy, to die praying and praising at the same time. Though I should be thankful to God to let me die praying, yet at the same time I should greatly glorify his holy name if he would let me die praising also.

Even a child of God may tremble at the thought of dying, but he looks by faith through the bible, as through a telescope, into the regions above, and is cheered by a glimpse of the

“building of God, eternal in the heavens,” which is preparing for his reception when the “house of this tabernacle shall be dissolved.”

O that I may be enabled to say with dignified calmness, “farewell time, hail eternity. Come, welcome death, for I shall awake from death to everlasting life.” Blessed words are those we read over the bodies of departed friends—they sounded well when they were living, and sweetly when they were dying—“O death where is thy sting! O grave where is thy victory! the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law, but thanks be to God (I admire the wording) which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” He combatted the king of terrors, he entirely overcame him, and opened the door of everlasting life to all who die in the faith. What a fine blessing is pronounced in the expression, “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord,—even so saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours.” Farewell sin, farewell sorrow, farewell distress; all hail, death, for it brings joy everlasting; all hail, the hour that will introduce me to the Saviour’s presence, where I shall be crowned with eternal glory!

Instead of being surprised that we die so soon, the marvel should be, that, considering the wonderful frame we bear about with us, we endure so long. Dr. Watts says,

“Our heart contains a thousand strings,
And fails if one be gone.”

It is amazing indeed that a harp with a thousand strings should keep in tune so long. Our breath is in our nostrils; we are in momentary danger. How frequent are awful instances of sudden death. Somehow, I desire that this may not be my lot; and I can fully enter into the prayer “from sudden death good Lord deliver us.” Certainly, if I am prepared, sudden death will be sudden glory; yet I would be permitted to have some preparatory hours before my dissolution takes place. It is awful to reflect on the appalling progress of time. No sooner does the sun reach its meridian than it begins to descend; night follows night, and day follows day, and every pulse we beat leaves one less to beat again. O that I could but adequately feel the danger of living in an unprepared state! O for such a frame of mind as would enable me to say, “come Lord, even though thou comest quickly.”

We cannot impede the progress of the hour of death, or of the day of judgment. How soon these may arrive, is known alone to infinite wisdom. Should we not tremble in expectation of the approach of some mighty chieftain, whose commission was to slay each foe he vanquished? This is the province of the conqueror Death, and none shall escape! He may not come to-day or to-morrow, but as sure as we are born, we are born to die. Death will soon shut me out of the pulpit—may the Lord bear with me a little longer, that I may be the means of saving a few more sinners before I die.

SECTION XX.

HEAVEN.

It is the blessedness, and not the brightness, of heaven which constitutes its happiness.

What shall I have in heaven? Christ the object of my faith and love; he who is now "within me the hope of glory," blessing me with a foretaste of heaven while on earth. Let Christ dwell in me, and I want no more.

I know but of one heaven for God's people. Holiness is the region in which they are to dwell. The full enjoyment of holiness is the full enjoyment of heaven itself.

The oculist says to his recovering patient, "now we may let you have the shutter a little open, and afterwards, when you can bear it, you may have the full light." So the Lord deals with the weak powers of his people; he gives them daily increasing light, as a gradual prepa-

ration for the time when they shall gaze upon the full splendour of his majesty, and "see as they are seen, and know as they are known."

What a heaven will the true Christian have ! Not only a heaven prepared for him, but a heaven within him, to meet the heaven above—a heaven of purity within, to meet the heaven of holiness without, and all of God as a security for its eternal duration.

How many myriads of angels are now praising God above, glorifying his name and doing all his will, finding it their perpetual heaven to be as God would have them to be ! To this heaven shall we be exalted, if by the grace of God we are brought to be in such union with him in time, as will make us meet for eternal happiness when time shall be no more.

I believe that heaven will be a place of eternal surprise at the glory of God, ourselves, our salvation, our former ignorance. We shall also be surprised at the perfection of God's wisdom and contrivances, as well as at the wonderful expansion of our once little understandings.

Undoubtedly God has given me an immortal spirit, and can if he pleases put grandeur therein. He can dignify me amazingly. There is no doubt of what he can do ; and therefore I ought to remember, that though insignificant in myself, I lose a great deal of my insignificance when dignified by his grace. He enlarges the mind exceedingly. If God then can so expand the mind of a sinner upon earth, what inconceivable enlargement shall we enjoy, when we come to be "filled with all the fulness of God" in heaven !

We cannot have the remotest idea of what heaven is, unless we know and feel what heavenly-mindedness is.

I dare not speculate upon that which is beyond my comprehension, namely, "what we shall be." It is enough for me to know "that I shall be like him, for I shall see him as he is." I cannot understand what a spiritual body is, till I have that spiritual body. After I have been in heaven ten thousand times ten thousand years, not one wrinkle of age shall furrow my glorified brow.

SECTION XXI.

THE SCRIPTURES.

WE read our bibles well, if the holy language of them constrains us to pray to God to fix his precepts in our hearts.

It is impossible fully to believe a single truth revealed in the word of God, which will not be blessed and sanctified to us, if we are enabled to receive it through the divine Spirit.

There are only two ways of knowing the Lord, and these are inseparable. *First*, by the letter of his word; *secondly*, by the Spirit's application of the letter of the word: I have these two lights to guide me; the light of the book *before my eyes*; the light of the Holy Ghost *in my heart*.

It is a great mercy, in reading the bible, to be prepared to take *all* the truths of the gospel as we find them.

The waters of the sanctuary (Ezekiel xlvii.) flowed from the temple and formed a river that none could ford. Thus it stands with respect to divine revelation. There are some truths in which faith may walk with delight; there are others which are deep waters for purification and sanctification; but there are others also, too deep for the most exalted understanding, being far beyond the reach of human comprehension. We must be content therefore to keep within our depth.

Many of the prophecies of ancient times appeared quite dark when they were uttered, but they became light afterwards. So it will be respecting the book of Revelation. I think the light which is to shine upon it is reserved for the millennial days, when "the kingdoms of the earth shall become the kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Christ," at which period there shall be such a glorious display of almighty power, that earth shall nearly resemble heaven.

There are many that cannot understand the Scriptures, because they *will not* take them for their guide.

In my own existence there is a multitude of things I do not understand. I do not know how my faculties lead me to act and think ; or why there should be more thought in me than in a tree, or how it is contrived at all. If then I cannot comprehend my own self, shall I wonder because I cannot explain all the mysteries of the word of God ?

Scripture is like the firmament in a fine starlight night ; many bright orbs are set in the midst of much obscurity. But thanks be to God, the parts necessary to be seen by me are luminous. There is not in the bible a single *essential* truth that is not comparatively plain.

If we have bible minds they will at once explain what the bible means. I heard of a deist who took a little time to consider the word of God, and his objection to it was a very striking one—"it tells me of a state of mind which no man can reach." He spake truly, for no man can tell what bible wisdom is, but as he is made wise by the Holy Ghost.

It is comfortable to find, when we attempt to expound the word of God, that we can give it

an interpretation which bears the very stamp of truth.

Some truths do not influence the mind, but every scripture truth does when rightly received. It cannot be otherwise, for it is nothing less than an eternal matter between God and our souls. Our knowledge will be only against us, if we know not how to put it to good account before God.

It is a good sign of spiritual life, when we select and enjoy the spiritual parts of the bible.

The word of God contains many a fine golden chain, the links of which are truths inseparably united to each other.

Instead of lowering the precepts of Scripture to the standard of the world, I would say, "Lord, bring my mind up to the spirit of its wise and holy instructions."

I do not desire to judge of the bible by my experience, but to try my experience by the test of the bible.

The light of revelation is given to guide me, but the Spirit of God must open mine eyes, that I may see things as they are really intended to be revealed to me.

I greatly blame myself for not entering more into the marrow of Scripture; alas, when I read my bible, the words often pass before my eyes without entering into my heart.

It is very profitable to read the bible; still to read it with real advantage, we must catechize ourselves by it, and see whether we reach the high standard set before us in its pages.

We make a wrong use of the bible, when we cannot bless God for its practical commands as much as for its evangelical truths.

I must be content to leave futurity to unfold the figurative language of Scripture; and I must be satisfied not to know what God conceals. There is a sort of virtue in humble ignorance.

Simplicity, purity, fulness, adaptation, preservation, and remarkable efficacy, are six proofs

of the divine origin of the gospel, but to a Christian the greatest is this—"he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself."

I cannot doubt that the bible is right, if it has set me right.

God is only known to us by his Son, and therefore without a revelation of his Son, we must continue ignorant of him. This must necessarily be made through the word of truth; for as the sun can only be seen by its own beams, so Christ can alone be made visible by the light of his gospel.

My bible is before me; it contains only so many letters. Let me read it; many do so, and are no wiser for it. But if I read the lovely oracles of truth with light in my heart, I shall be struck with admiration of the divine energy of the language of God himself to my soul. I have been reading the New Testament over two or three times lately* in the original language, to refresh my memory; and the more

* This was in the Spring of 1830.

I look at the Scriptures and the interpretation that should be given to them, the more I am convinced that though I may have a bible in my hand, yet unless I have the grace of God in my heart, I shall never know the worth of that sacred book.

The bible is the only book which teaches us how infinite justice and infinite mercy can unite, to lift a ruined sinner from the dust.

I have two important subjects to think of, my God and myself—my God, what he is; myself, what I am before him. Outward observation enables me to trace his almighty hand in the scenes around me, but I can only silently adore his wisdom and his power. I am not, however, left to guess at the attributes of God according to the dim conceptions of human reason. I have a glorious revelation which tells me all that is needful for me to know, in a manner which never could have been conceived by me without it,

SECTION XXII.

THE MINISTRY.

GOD has given different gifts to different ministers; but that kind of preaching is the best, which aims at the great end of the gospel—the plucking of poor sinners as brands from the burning.

The seed sown will never spring up unless it is watered by prayer. I heard a man once say of his minister, “I love to hear him preach, because his preaching always causes me to pray.”

Ministers are stars in the right hand of God. Alas, how much we lack steadiness and firmness! The unnumbered stars of heaven continue their vast revolutions, without being upheld by any visible support; they roll through infinite space, according to the direction which eternal wisdom has given them, and never err in their courses, What an idea therefore have we of the charac-

ter of a minister of God, when he is described as a star in His right hand who sustains all things by the word of his power! We are thus exalted that we may manifest his grace; but how much grace do we need, to be worthy of being represented as truly elevated to this dignity—as held in the right-hand of the Majesty of heaven! How few of us give even the light of a glow-worm, much less of a star! It is of very little consequence how high we shine, the grand question is how bright we shine, and if we shed a light upon the sphere in which God has placed us.

I would be as earnest, as if it were my personal business to leave the pulpit, and go into every pew and get into every heart.

A minister who was brought to God in his old age used to say, “forty years did I preach, and preached nothing.” Till God converts us by his grace, we shall never convert others to his cause.

The worst robbery of God, is to get into the pulpit and rob him there.

I would rather resign my life in the full work of the ministry, than finish it in a dead manner.

I believe if ministers did but honour God the Spirit more, they would have greater success.

O my God ! what manner of persons should we be, who are to lead thy holy tribe to the celestial city of eternal glory !

I should rejoice to hear any one of my congregation saying " I forgot *who* preached, I felt so much the influence of *the truths* he preached. Blessed be God, I was enabled to repent, and the silent tears trickled down my cheeks. My heart was affected, it began to relent, and now it relents again, when I consider by whose mercy it was that I was blessed with these feelings."

Wherever we go, may we leave a savour behind us ; an evidence that we live most devotedly to God.

It is an awful thing for ministers to be only as scaffolding, which will be pulled down, when the temple it has assisted to build is finished.

Some people say to me, "You are always on one subject." I answer, "if you are new creatures in Christ Jesus, this old subject will be new to you every Sunday." It was a bad sign when the Israelites called the manna *light food*.

I feel it a great matter to be a spiritual preacher, and I pray God that I may never deliver a single sermon, that has not an immediate tendency to do good to the soul.

Ministers will contend effectually with sin in the people, when they fight manfully against it in themselves.

We ought to preach the gospel faithfully, boldly, confidently, lovingly, and leave the event to God. I know that some preachers are so afraid of their congregations, that they dare not speak out. Such never will be blessed.

We should always keep in God's way, that we may be prepared for God's work.

If God favours us with success in our work, we should only be led by it to look more to him. I remember once turning giddy in climbing a

high building; a man said to me, "do not look down, but look up." If the heights of prosperity make us giddy, let us look up.

I verily believe the reason why some ministers see so little conversion take place under their ministry, is because they expect so little.

Worldly men may hate us for righteousness' sake, but let us take care that they only hate us for that which has a tendency to do them good.

Much of God's Spirit is needed in those who visit the bed-sides of sick men.

I hope I know something of the unsearchable riches of Christ; but if I had felt this better, I should have been able to have told my hearers more about it.

The disciples dealt out to the multitude the bounteous feast that Christ had provided for them, but they could not eat as fast as the Lord increased it before their eyes. The ministers of the gospel may experience the same thing spiritually.

Some ministers of sudden and short-lived popularity, may be compared to sky-rockets, which when first lit up, rush into the air with great brilliancy, but the sparks of their fiery zeal soon go out, and they fall as mere dead sticks to earth, and rise no more.

If I am conscious of the Lord's approbation of my work, I feel more joy than in ten thousand smiles of a deceitful world.

We lose our characters with the world by a faithful style of preaching; but who would not lose a thousand characters, for the sake of bringing lost sinners to the knowledge of Christ?

He that preaches the atonement of Christ, without enforcing the necessity of regeneration by the Spirit of Christ, does not preach the gospel.

I heard a minister once complained of in these terms: "he is a very judicious divine, but he does not bring the truth home to us; it sounds more like speculation than reality." O let us aim at *realities*. This is a *reality*—an assertion that has divine truth in it—that the

Lord Jesus is the life of the souls of his people, and that by his living in them, they have a life which they will feel to be a life even in death.

Human oratory often clouds divine truth.

We must take care of strong expressions, when we cannot have the Scriptures to confirm them.

What we want are gospel tempers, gospel dispensations, gospel feelings, and a power to set forth a gospel Christ.

Legal preaching is to tell men to obey the law by their own exertions. *Evangelical* preaching proclaims the same law, but instead of directing men to keep its commands by the depraved, ruined, and deceitful operations of their own hearts, it directs them to do it by the power of God.

Surface preaching is useless preaching.

It was an awful saying of an eminent ecclesiastic when he came to die, that he would willingly forego all his honours, rank, station, learning,

wealth, and count them as nothing, could he but be well assured that he had been the means of bringing one sinner to repentance. We may rank high in the church, and be numbered with the learned and the great, but it requires the strength of grace to be made useful in conversions, and this can only be obtained from the Spirit of God.

It is impossible for a preacher to do justice to a spiritual subject without a spiritual mind.

We cannot find a sinner out of hell, to whom we may not proclaim the message of salvation.

When earthly things engross a minister's attention, he will think more of this world than of the next, and his preaching will savour more of the casket than of the jewels. If he is not a spiritual man himself, he has no reason to suppose that God will bless him with a spiritual people.

It is a sad blot in a minister's character when he hardly knows what to preach; sometimes on one beat, and sometimes on another, varying his sentiments as often as the moon changes her aspect.

It will be a great blessing to have what we preach when living, for our consolation when dying.

If we really believe and feel that we are the servants of God in delivering the truth, we shall much more fear treachery and dissimulation than we shall the wrath of man.

The minister's greatest difficulty, is to get the sinner to consent to God's way of saving.

Some persons may say of a minister, "We like to hear him, he has so much to say that was never said before!" Such people will never come to hear *me*, for I like the old things best. They are the same though varied. The right mode of preaching is to vary the same fundamental truths, so as to bring them home fresh to the mind.

I do not like trifling and irreverence. I want to be solemn, but I desire to have this holy solemnity sweetened by love.

It is a sort of sinful Sabbath-breaking, to go into God's house merely to exhibit fine words.

God grant that no day may pass, in which I do not endeavour to win some soul to Christ.

The invitation of the gospel is universal. We ought to make it so, when God has made it so—"whosoever will, let him come."

I do not complain of the want of more of this world's oratory, of whatever worth it may be. If we are made instruments of alarming sinners, and they escape from the wrath to come, this is enough. I should not stand and speak *oratorically* before the house of any one when it was in flames, but I should strive all I could to awaken its inmates, that they might not perish in the conflagration.

I often think *how* I have preached. I do not desire to retract my doctrines ; I am only grieved that I have not delivered them in a manner more consistent with their importance.

O my God, I tremble at this cold heart of mine, lest those who hear me should grow cold also.

I hope I am fond of preaching morality, but I know that in order to bring men to be truly moral, I must show them the need of spirituality. Mr. Berridge used to say he had preached morality in his parish, till there was not a moral man in it. Nothing will purify the heart but the simple gospel of Christ Jesus.

Faithful preaching will be owned of God. I remember very many years ago, when in my younger days, I had been preaching out of doors in my plain manner, a man came to me weeping, and said, "I wanted to stone you as much as ever Saul wanted to stone Stephen, and I came with my pockets full of stones for that purpose. I stood to hear you and my heart was touched; I put my hand in one pocket, and cast away a stone out of that, and then I put my hand into the other, and did the same, till I had dropped them all, for I trust the Lord was taking the stone out of my heart." May the Lord help us so to preach, that the stones may drop out of our hearers' hearts under the sound of a faithful message from God.

I want grace practically. I long to feel my love burning with holy zeal, and I desire at the

same time, to be led to a more entire dependence upon God, and to be kept in the dust, that I may be more in prayer, and that all good things may be so sweetly and powerfully operating on my heart, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, as to give an unction to my work.

A minister should aim so to preach the bible into his people's hearts, that the world may see that a sweet correspondence exists between their conduct and the bible.

I have served my congregation nearly fifty years, and have never quarrelled with any of them but on account of their sins. Thanks be to God, peace has reigned amongst us.

When cleansing the Lord's garden, we must only cast the weeds over the *fence*; it is God's province to throw them into the *fire*.

I have heard some persons, when leaving a place of worship, admiring the minister, and exclaiming, "what splendid language!—what beautiful metaphors!—what original illustrations!" May they rather say, after hearing me,

“ what sinners we are !—what a glorious Christ we have !—what a blessed salvation ! ”

Exemplifying duty does more than explaining it.

It is not the dress of the sermon, but its sum and substance which does good to the mind.

Young ministers never begin well, except they begin with a sense of the necessity of total dependence upon God.

I have often thought of the following good advice from an old minister : “ whenever you take a practical text, preach upon it evangelically, and when you take an evangelical text, preach upon it practically.” These two modes are not opposed to each other, but beautifully harmonized together.

Two things are to be particularly aimed at by every minister—good conduct and sound truth.

A minister, who was awakened late in life, uttered this exclamation of regret, “ O what would I give for the recall of those souls who

may have perished under my ministry, before I learned to preach Christ."

When I see my people indifferent, I always carefully examine myself, to discover whether it is occasioned by my own dulness.

DEVOTIONS.

The soul desires not only to speak to God, but to make melody to God: the heart is the instrument, but the graces are the strings and prayer the touching them. **CHARNOCK.**

The veteran gave us an incomparable prayer.

HANNAH MORE, OF ROWLAND HILL.



DEVOTIONS.

A PRAYER FOR THE GRACE OF DEDICATION TO THE GLORY OF GOD.

WE desire to draw nigh unto thee, O God, relying on thine own gracious promise, that "whatsoever we shall ask in thy name, believing, we shall receive." Give us that faith which is of the operation of thy Spirit, that we may have freedom of access to thee with confidence. Blessed be thy name, Justice has received its full satisfaction, and now Mercy smiles. Come, gracious Lord, impart thy blessing, and grant that we may all feel that it is our high privilege to dedicate and devote body, soul, and spirit, all we have and are, as living sacrifices to a loving Saviour. Is there any idol that we have not parted with? Are there any secret abominations working in our hearts? Wilt thou not be jealous of thine own glory? Search us, try us, and see what is wrong in us; nail every corruption to thy cross, and let it die before thee. Not

only destroy every abomination, but do thou who art the God of all grace, and the giver of all grace, the fountain whence the streams of heavenly graces flow, cause them to find their way into our hearts with their precious influence, from time to time. Prepare us for what is preparing for us, and as we are all soon to pass out of time into eternity, may we be daily diligent to live more abundantly to thy praise.

A PRAYER FOR AN HUMBLE SENSE OF THE DIVINE
PATIENCE.

O THOU God of infinite holiness and purity, how can such sinful and polluted creatures as we are, stand in the presence of that Majesty that fills the throne of grace ! What are we as creatures in thy sight !—less than nothing worse than nothing, because of our sins. O the patience and forbearance of our God, that have caused thee gladly to lay aside the vengeance we so richly deserved, and to continue the mercies we forfeit every moment we enjoy them. May the Lord make us sensible what a privilege it is, that we are still upon the ground where mercy is set before the children of men.

Lord ! we may escape, let our condition be what it will ; to the vilest sinner in thy sight is redemption grace yet offered ! May thy sparing mercy lead us to repentance, remembering that while we might justly be cut down by the hand of vengeance, yet we have thy patience and forbearance extended to us. Let us remember the time will soon come, when we must answer before thee, for the abuse of that patience which thou art now manifesting. Give thy people a good hope through grace, that all is ready with them. We beseech thee that we may so "pass through things temporal, that we lose not the things which be eternal ;" that "amidst all the changes and chances of this mortal life, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where alone true joys are to be found." We beg every mercy and blessing for a Saviour's sake.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON, PREACHED ON THE
EVENING OF THE FUNERAL OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN
CHARLOTTE. WEDNESDAY, DEC. 2, 1818.

O THOU that art infinitely glorious, and infinitely to be feared, it behoves us to come into thy presence with holy reverence, to acknowledge

thy greatness and majesty, whilst at the same time, it becomes us to honour thee in the infinite purity of the divine existence. Thou never canst behold sin in thy creatures, without a supreme hatred against that which is rebellion against infinite goodness. Thou canst sooner cease to be, than cease to hate that which is sinful in thy sight. The Lord grant that we may be made wholly spiritual; that we may feel sin to be detestably sinful before thee, and know that we can never be saved from its curse, but as we are delivered from its dominion and power. O Lord, convince us that we must thus be delivered from it. We glory in the characteristics of that divine mercy towards us, which thy gospel reveals, teaching us how we who are captives to sin and death, may be brought to partake of the power of that life from thee, whereby alone we are enabled to live unto thee. May the "light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, shine into all our hearts." May we know what life spiritual is, by feeling what divine salvation does. O Lord, we know the solemn decree that all men must once die, and that after death comes judgment. We are as sure, as that we are now alive, that we must die; but alas, how supinely do we

live, notwithstanding the certainty of death ! Lord, what avails the long account of three-score years and ten, when their sum is but as a day before thee ; and of what real value are all the splendours and majesty of royalty, and all the good and great things of this world, which is but as a bubble, compared with eternity, and whose pride passeth away ! Prepare us to meet thee, by sending down the powerful influence of thy gracious Spirit into our hearts. Whenever thou art pleased to afflict a house with death, be pleased to visit the same house with love and zeal for thee. As it has now, within a short period, been thy will to cut off two branches of our beloved Royal Family, grant, Lord, that the remainder may learn to live to thy praise and the best welfare of our nation. May they all follow thee, and may we follow in their path. May we never be elevated by earthly splendour ; but let us remember that it is but a shadow, that we may be led to seek the true substance. We would bless thee for the various situations we are permitted to fill in this life. Deliver us from the distressing circumstances of poverty, and from the dangerous love of wealth, that we may not be made vain by the one, nor driven to despair by the

other. Lord, help us each to adorn whatever situation we may fill. May we all hear thy word with holy solemnity of mind. Grant that those of us who are in our declining days, may find our souls to be specially revived by thee, that we may be made ripe for heaven before the day of our death. Lord, hear our prayers for all the survivors of our Royal Family ; prepare our aged sovereign for a more glorious crown, and may his successors be made meet for their throne by grace upon their hearts. We entreat thee to hear and answer our prayers for the sake of our dear Redeemer. *Our Father, &c.*

PRAYER BEFORE SERMON, JAN. 17, 1819.

THOU, O Lord, art infinitely more exalted than the most glorious of created beings can ever be, yet thou needest not to be told of thy own greatness ; but O may we be humbled before thee, under a sense of the perfect purity and sublimity of thy divine Majesty. What are we in thy sight ! There is that in thy divine existence, which should make us blush with shame when we think, though man was made in thy image, how that image is defaced, and how sin-

ful we are. But, glory be to thy name, thou hast provided a mode of salvation, and that salvation is completed by the power of thy Holy Spirit sent to regenerate a race of fallen sinners, redeemed by Christ Jesus, and commanded to stand forth to the glory of His grace who hath power to quicken the "dead in trespasses and sins." We wait upon our God for this power, and may we be enabled to experience that no one waiteth on thee in vain, and that thou wilt renew the strength of thy people who draw near to thee for a revival of it. Blessed forever be our God; for all the mercies we possess. Quicken us by the power of thy Spirit, in the preaching of thy word. Let those who hear feel God's presence in their hearts, and may light shine forth, and do abundance of good to the souls of men. Succour all that need thy succouring hand. Save the lives of useful and valuable Christians, that their children may be brought up in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord." May all alarms and trials be sanctified. May those before thee feel the spiritual presence of the Lord; let thy word have a gracious influence on every mind, and may the gospel be a blessing to us all, for Christ's sake.

Our Father; &c.

AN HUMBLE ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE POWER AND
GOODNESS OF GOD.

O LORD GOD, whilst thou art exalted in the majesty of thy throne, far above what any comprehension of ours can reach ; whilst thine infinite glory is the wonder of celestial beings, and whilst their services are so far beyond ours, and more worthy of thee,—yet thou condescendest to lend a gracious ear to the words of sinners, vile and worthless as we are. We come to thee through that living way which thou hast ordained,—the sacrifice of God our Saviour, the great atoning Redeemer, who “purged our sins by his own blood.” O may he destroy the dominion of sin in every one of our souls, that “grace may reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord,” and that we may have our minds brought into holy conformity with thy divine mind and will. How frequently have we to mourn over the impertinent thoughts, which divert our minds from their sacred exercises in thy presence. Condescend, O God, to take the total management of us into thy hands, for we find it more than we can do, to control the evil of our own hearts. We are filled with holy

surprise in thinking of thine infinity, O gracious God! Thou canst manage all things at the same moment of time. If thou wert to create ten thousand times more worlds than now exist, they would not surpass the power of thy omnipresence to pervade them all! Thy greatness is too wonderful for us; and yet what condescension hast thou shown to man, in bringing thy people to thyself by such mysterious ways of mercy and compassion! If we are deprived of all besides, we feel that we have every thing in thee.

A THANKSGIVING FOR THE SAVIOUR'S INCARNATION.

O God, our poor finite minds can have no just comprehension of thine infinite glory. It becomes us to bow with humble reverence before thee, and to give that honour which is due to thine infinite name. Lord, we beseech thee, that while we feel our dependence, and tremble, or ought to tremble before thy splendour, yet still we may draw near with confidence, knowing that the same glorious Being, that is adored by all the celestial powers above, will accept our adoration also. We desire to feel thy greatness, and yet

love thee for thy goodness. Whilst we tremble under a sense of thy Majesty, may we love thee, because thou art still our God in a Saviour's love. O that the "High and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity," should condescend to take a body like ours, and that "all the fulness of the Godhead" should dwell in man's person—that the same glorious Lord, whom "the heaven of heavens cannot contain," should deign to enter our humble frame! such knowledge is too wonderful for us, and while we cannot comprehend it by our reason, we bless thee that thou hast revealed it, and what we cannot reach unto, we adore.

A CONFESSION OF THE UNWORTHINESS OF THE BEST
OF MEN.

O THOU God of infinite compassion, we are yet upheld through the riches of thy patience and forbearance towards us very unworthy creatures and rebels. If infinite patience did not possess thy mind, we should long ago have been banished from thy presence; for though, through mercy, many of us have been redeemed from those outward sins which offend the eyes

of man, yet how much have we to lament respecting what is inward, and seen only by the eye of God. Enter not into judgment with the best of thy servants, O our God, for in thy sight what flesh living can be justified? We are grieved, O Lord, that we cannot be as obedient as we would—that our hearts are so hard, and possessed of so few of those holy feelings, which we ought to have as contrite sinners before thee. Blessed be God for the fulness of grace we have in Christ our Redeemer, who died for our sins, and made that great satisfaction whereby, most vile as we are, we have “freedom and access with confidence into that grace wherein we stand.”



PRAYER BEFORE SERMON, SUNDAY MORNING,
APRIL 4, 1819.

MAY we feel a solemn reverence upon our minds, O Lord, while we attempt to approach unto thy glorious Majesty. O save us from “the carnal mind,” which is “enmity against God.” We desire deeply to lament the inward depravity of our hearts, and to grieve that we are not more holy. Blessed be thy holy name, we shall have grace

love thee for thy goodness. Whilst we tremble under a sense of thy Majesty, may we love thee, because thou art still our God in a Saviour's love. O that the "High and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity," should condescend to take a body like ours, and that "all the fulness of the Godhead" should dwell in man's person—that the same glorious Lord, whom "the heaven of heavens cannot contain," should deign to enter our humble frame! such knowledge is too wonderful for us, and while we cannot comprehend it by our reason, we bless thee that thou hast revealed it, and what we cannot reach unto, we adore.

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OF MEN.

O THOU God of infinite compassion, we are yet upheld through the riches of thy patience and forbearance towards us very unworthy creatures and rebels. If infinite patience did not possess thy mind, we should long ago have been banished from thy presence; for though, through mercy, many of us have been redeemed from those outward sins which offend the eyes

of man, yet how much have we to lament respecting what is inward, and seen only by the eye of God. Enter not into judgment with the best of thy servants, O our God, for in thy sight what flesh living can be justified? We are grieved, O Lord, that we cannot be as obedient as we would—that our hearts are so hard, and possessed of so few of those holy feelings, which we ought to have as contrite sinners before thee. Blessed be God for the fulness of grace we have in Christ our Redeemer, who died for our sins, and made that great satisfaction whereby, most vile as we are, we have “freedom and access with confidence into that grace wherein we stand.”



PRAYER BEFORE SERMON, SUNDAY MORNING,
APRIL 4, 1819.

MAY we feel a solemn reverence upon our minds, O Lord, while we attempt to approach unto thy glorious Majesty. O save us from “the carnal mind,” which is “enmity against God.” We desire deeply to lament the inward depravity of our hearts, and to grieve that we are not more holy. Blessed be thy holy name, we shall have grace

to avoid outward iniquity, if thou art pleased to keep us inwardly. Grant, Lord, that we may have that lovely mind, which was so beautifully exemplified in Christ, when he appeared in human form, though filled with the perfection of the divine nature. We are in thy presence; keep us from spending an unprofitable Sabbath. May we reckon up our religious privileges with gratitude, and may the hearers in thy presence pray not to depart without that which shall be profitable to their hearts, and make them blessings to each other. As they pass through this world, may the Lord pass through the world with them. O God, we look up to thee, that by the manifestation of the power of thy grace we may partake of the spirit of holiness. We believe that though thou art a God of infinite majesty, yet thou wilt dwell in the hearts of all those whom thou bringest to partake of thy glory. O for Christ Jesus' sake come thou and make our hearts a habitation for thyself—that habitation of holiness wherein a holy God condescends to dwell. Look upon any that request an interest in our prayers. Give patience and resignation to parents that have lost a beloved child; with submission to thy will enable them deeply and experimentally to say, “the Lord gave, and

the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." Let those give thanks that have been graciously preserved in the hour of childbirth, and are brought to bless God. Whilst the abundance of thy loving kindness is over us for good, may we praise thee for it. Help us in the great work before us. The Lord knows the work to be solemn and important; help us to feel it so, and may the power of the gospel be at hand to do us good. Hear and answer us for Jesus Christ's sake. *Our Father, &c.*

A PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL FERVOUR.

HELP us, O God, to offer thee all our hearts as living sacrifices to thy praise. Lord, what have we to give thee but thine own? We have wronged thee of thy glory, and done dishonour to thy name. O claim and take us for thyself, and let a holy fire from above be kindled in our hearts. Great God, what a miracle didst thou manifest, when the bush burned but was not consumed! O Lord, let such a flame break forth in our hearts; yea, may a heavenly flame be there kindled, that shall rise higher and higher. Let us all experience what a precious

influence is produced on the soul, when God himself, through Christ, is in us of a truth.

A PRAYER FOR UNION WITH CHRIST.

O THOU infinitely holy and merciful God, we turn our guilty eyes unto thy throne of grace. We know that we are sinners, but we praise thy glorious name for that most adorable Saviour, who has "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Glory be to God, the work is done—our debts are paid, and we now view with joy Justice smiling on mankind, while Mercy descends through him who hath finished the work. This is our plea for the sending down of thy blessed Spirit to abide in our hearts. We plead for the gift of the Holy Spirit, through the gracious work the Saviour has finished on our behalf. Now, Lord, since thou art reconciled to us, and we have the ministry of reconciliation preached to us, let the spirit of reconciliation be felt in a union of our hearts by thy Spirit to the Redeemer, so that every believer may be enabled to say, "my beloved is mine and I am his."

A PRAYER FOR FILIAL RELIANCE UPON GOD.

O LORD, help us to feel that we are members of thy celestial family. May we know thee the God whom we approach, as a loving Father ready to give an answer to all his children. O God, may we never pray without an earnest expectation that our prayers will be answered. While the sword of thy justice is unsheathed, ready to bathe itself in our guilty blood, we fall down and beg for mercy. Let us all be looking up to thee, with solid expectation of good. Save us from a useless and barren spirit. Thou that art our light, be also our life, and in thy light may life be given. Hear and answer prayer for the sake of the dear Redeemer.

A PRAYER FOR HEAVENLY-MINDEDNESS.

O LORD our God; we know that we cannot serve thee acceptably, unless we serve thee spiritually; and we feel that we can only be made spiritual, by the wise communication of thy mind to our minds. Let us then never dare to be proud

of any service we perform; for we can offer no sacrifice aright, but as the materials of it are bestowed on us from heaven itself. Do we offer thee a broken and contrite heart? how came we to possess it, so as to give ourselves up unto the Lord to be saved, but as thou wert pleased to create that heavenly frame within us? How can we present before the Lord a heavenly mind from an earthly bosom? If thou art not pleased to give us a heavenly mind, we cannot draw near to thee.

A THANKSGIVING FOR THE THRONE OF GRACE.

Most glorious God! Thou hast before thee millions of seraphic beings who serve thee, yet still thou bendest thine ear to regard our unworthy supplications. What infinite condescension, O thou Majesty of heaven, to turn thy chariot wheels downward to this lower world, to bring peace and glad tidings to rebels—rebels whose rebellion against thee might most righteously have excluded them from thy favour, and consigned them to eternal wo. We have each done enough to lose ten thousand souls. Yet blessed be God, sinners may come through

the Saviour to a throne of grace, and the case of no one is hopeless if made "willing in the day of thy power." O help us to throw down the arms of our rebellion, and save us from an obstinate refusal of the only way of mercy.

A MINISTER'S PRAYER FOR HELP AND SUCCESS.

O LORD our God, what an honour it is to be permitted to pray, yet how many thousands are there who never think about this solemn service! When we are enabled to deal with thee, we are divinely purified by thee. O that we may be taught by thy Spirit how to approach thee. Lord, what numbers do we still see reveling in their corruptions; give them that regenerating grace which can alone lift them out of their degraded state. Is not thy gospel designed to dignify our fallen nature; and is it not by the same instrument that those wonders are effected that are to thy glory, and the comfort of the happy souls who are the blessed recipients of truth? Dear Lord, thy poor unworthy servant wants something that is more worthy of thine excellent Majesty; he would desire to gain souls, and win them over to the knowledge

of Christ. But what can his wishes do? Even were his words the very language of his God, all would be in vain, if grace were not given that the people might receive them to their eternal benefit. Enable us to look up to thee with humble reverence and godly fear, and be with us for thy mercy's sake. Send us thy light, and vouchsafe to shine forth in the brightness of thine own glory, and by the manifestation of thine own power. May the people's souls rise after God, and attend to the eternal good that is treasured up in Him, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Lord, let thy glorious light, and life, and Spirit, be given through him "who hath loved us and given himself for us." Keep us all by thine own hand; help *me*, O my God! Remove ignorance from the mind, hardness from the heart, and alienation from the affections. May all that is within us be ready to receive thy word. Hear us and answer us, O Lord God, for our Saviour and Redeemer's sake.

PRAYER BEFORE SERMON, MARCH 31, 1822.

O INFINITELY holy God, by thy providence we have lived to see another Sabbath; by thy kind

support we are brought again into thy house. But, Lord, what avails our being where thy people are, if thou art not present with us? Blessed Saviour, thou didst manifest thy glorious Godhead, by ascending up on high, and leaving this gracious promise that thou wouldest be with thy disciples "always, even to the end of the world." Be it according to the good word of thy grace. We now humbly beseech thee to fulfil thy promise. O that God may be with us. We cannot come to thy house with our bodies, without our souls—while our bodies are before thee, condescend to be divinely present in our souls. What is the mere body of flesh and blood!—yet there is within it an inhabitant of immortal duration; and it should be our most solemn concern that our spirits be made subject to that divine power, whereby thou mayest be seen to deal with us, while we deal with thee. Now, O Lord, apply the preaching of thy word to the consciences of the people, and so help the preacher that all may have reason to say, it was good for them to be here. Hear our supplications for any that may be near the solemn moment of their dissolution; and grant every one of us good evidence, that when this earthly house shall be dissolved, we shall have

a spiritual mansion, eternal in the heavens. Built up in thy holy faith below, may we each become a holy temple to the Lord. We entreat thee to carry on thy glorious work throughout the world, and raise up such instruments as shall be blessed in it. Prepare hearts to receive the glad tidings of salvation, and manifest the glorious power that can alone accomplish the miraculous change which takes place where thy gospel, the word of life, is dispensed. Wherever thou hast a church, may there be a lively minister in the midst of it; and may all with one heart glorify God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Accept the praises of such as have received mercies, and while thy bountiful providences are around us, may we live to thy praise. *Our Father, &c.*

A PRAYER FOR GRACE TO OFFER ACCEPTABLE SERVICE
IN THE SANCTUARY.

O LORD, we beseech to let us come into thy temple, offering up to thee a sacrifice of thine own making, and by fire of thine own kindling. May we have that holy incense created in us by God the Holy Spirit, which will render our

services pleasant to ourselves, and acceptable in thy sight. O help us to find our joy in thy service; may we feel that to serve thee is to imitate heaven upon earth. Give us more of thy blessed Spirit, that we may be enabled to approach thee with increasing purity and spirituality from time to time. Vouchsafe to us more wisdom, tenderness, and holy submission to thy will, and memories more retentive of what is good, with affections alive to thee. O that we may be able to serve thee "in the spirit, and not in the letter," seeking "praise, not of men but of God." Let the Holy Ghost descend on us while before thee. May the glory of the gospel of God our Saviour every where blaze forth, and let its powerful influence be displayed all over the world. Hasten the time when many shall come from far to seek thy name, and to rejoice in the salvation which thou hast revealed. Lord, thy ministers have an infinite task before them. How can we speak of those things upon which our everlasting concerns depend, with the solemnity and wisdom they deserve! O let the "light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" shine forth, that in his "light we may see light." Whilst we have an opportunity

of engaging in thy service, may we be eager to enjoy it, and may we feel thee near to our hearts, and experience thy presence, which is infinitely better than life itself. We ask all favours and mercies for God our Saviour's sake.

A MINISTER'S SABBATH MORNING PRAYER.

O MY God, I most humbly ask thee to give me grace and wisdom to feed the people with that which shall be profitable. Make thine own word successful upon their consciences. Unless the Lord speak by us, we speak in vain. Great God, be also with the people; may they esteem their privileges, and hasten this morning to thy courts. As the bright sun of thy creation fertilizes and exhilarates where it shines, so may the glorious light of thy gospel shine into all our hearts. May we be enabled to "see the King in his beauty." Lord, our minds will be wandering, unless thou art pleased to keep them fixed; we shall be indifferent and careless, unless thou makest us to weigh the good things of thy word. O may the people this morning not only "mark and learn," but "inwardly di-

gest" thy glorious truth. May we commit ourselves to the care of our God this day, and do thou vouchsafe to be with us all the day long, for Christ our Mediator's sake.

A MINISTER'S DEDICATION OF HIMSELF AND FLOCK
BEFORE THE COMMUNION.

O MERCIFUL Lord, now enable us most fully and completely to give ourselves away out of our own hands into thine. Claim us and take us. We are thine by creation ; we are thine by preservation ; but abundantly more do we own ourselves to be thine, because thou hast redeemed us. Take us, dear Jesus, thou holy head of the church ; in thee may we have our perpetual existence, and in thee alone. Lord, thy poor servant desires with affectionate tenderness to commend this people of his charge to be under the guidance of omnipotence, and to beg that thou wilt keep them near to thee. Preserve them through time, that thou mayest bless them with thy high glory in the eternal world.

A PRAYER ON MEETING HIS PEOPLE AFTER A LONG
ABSENCE.

O WHAT a mercy it is, that we may draw near to God—that we have not long since been banished into darkness, and shut up in everlasting despair. That thou hast borne with such sinners, what an astonishing mercy! O that we may be enabled to reckon every moment a mercy, and every moment feel that God alone can make our souls to be a blessing to ourselves, and us to be a blessing to all who know us. Lord, make us blessings to one another. Come down and bless us abundantly, that thy church on earth may have some semblance of thy church in glory. Nothing is too hard for the Lord. Be in the midst of us and bless us. What avail thy house and ordinances without thyself, or of what value is thy blessed book which thou hast given to make us wise unto salvation, but as thou art pleased to inspire into our minds thy glorious wisdom by the Holy Spirit? Lord, make bare thine arm; make known thy power. Thou hast preserved us to meet once more in thy presence, and now thy poor aged servant humbly prays for thy remembrance in the last

days of his ministry. May he not grow cold in the sacred work. Give us all to feel how great and glorious the work is, and with what holy expectation we should wait upon God for its accomplishment upon our hearts. We need strength both of body and mind; Lord supply these our needs. Be pleased to impart to the people a praying frame of mind, that they may profit while they hear. Lord, pour down thy Spirit upon us, and rain down righteousness upon our souls. Bless those who have ministered to the people during the absence of thy servant, and may their word appear to be sown in good ground watered by the dew of heaven, that they may bring forth fruit to the glory of God. Raise up, O Lord, such ministers as shall exalt thy word in a powerful manner. We need fresh awakenings in our camps. O God, death is thinning thy church daily. O remember it and let the cry of new born souls be heard within its walls; and whilst thou art removing thy saints to glory above, may it appear that thou art continuing to recruit thy church below. These are the prayers we offer up through the atonement of our dear and Holy Redeemer.

Our Father, &c.

A PRAYER FOR NEARNESS TO GOD.

O THAT we may know what it is to draw near to God. O for a holy, happy frame of mind to live near to that glorious Being, with whom we expect to live to all eternity! But, O blessed God, we cannot indulge the vile corruptions of the human heart, and still live near to thee! O Lord, subdue all that separates between thee and us, and enable us with true hearts, unwearyed zeal, and godly sincerity, to give up ourselves as living sacrifices to thy glory and praise. We thank thee that thou hast given us a holy gospel; it is impossible to believe in it but by thy Spirit; yet if we believe in it by the influence of thy Spirit, it is impossible but that we should be made spiritual thereby. Lord, give us to surrender ourselves as living sacrifices to thee, and grant that every thing which may prevent holy union and communion between thyself and us may be withdrawn. We are ashamed that we do not serve thee with more holy fervour; that we are not more anxious to give ourselves into thy hands, and more abundantly determined to yield ourselves up to thee. We bless thee for the first and great command; we pray

thee to write upon each of our hearts, "thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength." Though we have lost thine image by the fall, yet thou hast graciously promised to restore it again, by our reunion with thyself through "the second Adam, the Lord from heaven." May we find that as He is the Lord from heaven, so by his restoring grace we receive heaven into our minds. O keep out impertinent and vain thoughts. Command that thy Holy Spirit may dwell within us, that we may be made spiritual and holy in thy sight.

A PRAYER AFTER THE DEATH OF SOME OF HIS
CONGREGATION.

O LORD, thou hast been pleased in thy providence, with regard to this dying world, to thin the ranks of the people in this place, by taking some of them to an eternal state! How soon must our time come! O God, grant that during the little moment we have to spend in time, we may be more seriously impressed with thoughts of the importance of eternity; and while we are con-

vinced (and can we think lightly of conviction!) that we are undone by sin, may we find grace reigning through righteousness unto everlasting life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. O that in divine mercy it may appear, that while our numbers are shortened by death, the Lord, by a fresh application of divine power, is commanding the dead in trespasses and sins more than to fill up the vacancies. Thou hast preserved the life of thy aged servant, far beyond his expectation, to the present time. My God, remain with me; forsake me not in my old age. As by grace thy work was begun in me, so by grace may it be ended. And what a wonderful grace is thy grace! Lord-help me. All my former help is gone. I need fresh help from my God, and desire with solemnity of mind to depend upon it alone. Of what value is the retention of memory—what avails the word of the lip, if God be not present with us? My God! make me the instrument of calling sinners to thee. May I make full proof of my ministry, even to the very last. Though respited for awhile, may we know that “it is appointed to all men once to die.” Lord enable us to live to thee. These supplications and prayers we humbly prefer, in the most holy name of our most holy Saviour.

PRAISE FOR CHRIST, AND A PRAYER FOR GRACE TO
SERVE THE LORD.

O THOU that fillest the throne of thy glory, and canst never be served, even by thy bright angels, according to the dignity and majesty of thy divine existence, yet thou condescendest to permit such worms as we are to come into thy presence, and to cast ourselves down before thee. O God, "enter not into judgment with thy servants, for in thy sight shall no flesh living be justified." We have sinned against thee to the ruin of our souls, and thou couldst not have beheld us without abhorrence, had it not been for a law-fulfilling Christ. We bless thee that thy infinite patience and forbearance preserve us from sinking down into eternal death. Praised be God for Him who hath "magnified the law" *for* us, by submitting to the penalty justly decreed against sin, and who hath condescended to "magnify the law" also *in* us, by bringing us into holy conformity to the same. O that the will of our heavenly Father may be wrought in all our minds, and may we delight in doing those things which are pleasing to him. What an honourable service, O Lord, is thine—how it dignifies, while it

humbles—how it exalts the soul, while it bows it down! What an honour to be made like God—to have his dear image in our minds, and his glorious likeness imparted to us! Lord implant it in us all.

A PRAYER FOR FEELINGS IN UNISON WITH OUR
EXPRESSIONS.

MERCIFUL God, how faintly do our prayers ascend before thee, and how little felt is the genuine spirit of devotion! How many confess themselves to be sinners, and yet never really lament! How many are constantly saying that they have been doing the things they should not have done, and left undone the things they should have done, and that there is “no health” in them; and after all their confessions, feel no suitable desires! Lord, make us to feel the awful mockery of such mere words before an infinitely holy, heart-searching God. And shall we thus mock thee! Shall our supplications be mere language of the lips, whilst nothing is duly felt within? O God Almighty grant that the spirit of prayer may descend with a divine energy upon our minds, and be diffused through all our hearts. O for the pouring down of thy

blessed Spirit. O for the appearance of the Son of God, with all his power upon our hearts, making us to know that there is a reality in religion, which can only be brought home by God himself. Lord, let us grasp after these things more ardently; may we enter into holy wrestlings with thee, that we may apprehend those things for which also we are apprehended of Christ Jesus. Thou wilt not dwell in temples that are unholy; thou must prepare the building that shall be inhabited by thyself. Come, dear Saviour, and drive all evil from our hearts, and make them temples of prayer to thee, the living God.

A CONFESSION OF SIN.

GRACIOUS God, we are utterly unworthy of any blessing from thee, or even to lie at thy footstool and cry for mercy. We have offended against laws calculated for our exceeding good, and commandments wise and benignant. Blessed be God, there is heaven in them: heaven in loving thee, and heaven in loving one another, for thy dear name's sake. Thou art the giver of all that is good, and forbiddest nothing but what is evil; but we rebels have transgressed

thy salutary laws, delightful in themselves, and have made ourselves abominable by our transgressions. But "there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared;" and we come to thee, seeking pardon through the riches of the great atonement. May sinners feel the energy of that divine Spirit, which brings those that were bound for everlasting death to the mercy seat, crying, "Lord we would seek to be saved from ourselves." O deliver us from that which is hateful in thy sight. Humble us in the dust, and then raise us up through the riches of thy grace, and for thy mercy's sake.

A WHITSUNDAY PRAYER BEFORE SERMON,

MAY 22, 1835.

LORD help us, and give us to feel our nearness to thee, that we may be blessed "with freedom and access with confidence into that grace wherein we stand." It is a miracle of mercy that thou permittest such poor sinners to cast themselves at thy feet, and to beg pardon, notwithstanding their rebellion. Be here, O Lord, we pray thee, by the power of thy Holy Spirit, to

make us feel sin to be that abomination which is infinitely vile. While we carry about with us bodies of sin and death, we would feel that nothing but a miracle of grace can set us against our corrupted selves. We are still allured by the deceitfulness of our corruptions; but we bless God, when we appeal to our heavenly Father, we appeal to one who is infinitely holy to purify. We want not a salvation that merely delivers from the punishment of sin, but we pray, O God, that thou wouldst be pleased, by the manifestation of thy peculiar power, to deliver us from the bondage of our natural corruptions, and to bring us into that blessed spirit of holy obedience which those enjoy who possess the glorious liberty thy gospel reveals to the heart. Do thou be pleased to make all evils vanish before the brightness of thy coming, and may the power of our God be omnipotently felt in the midst of us. What avails our assembling in thy house, if thou art not here? What avails our listening to the voice of truth, if the Lord sends it not home to our hearts? What avails our pleading the name of Jesus, if he be far from us? And what avails it, that we sit at the footstool of his mercy, if we do not partake of his forgiving love? O God, we are always

in want, and always in danger, and there is not a moment in which we do not need to feel a solemn dependence upon thee. This day, O Lord, we celebrate one of the greatest mercies ever exhibited to our fallen and ruined race. Praised be the dear Redeemer, who appeared as the "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," "to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," sustaining, when he died upon the cross, all the agonies of the divine wrath and vengeance. But of what benefit will this glorious work of our Saviour be to those in whom its effects are not accomplished? We therefore pray that what our Lord procured, when he died in our stead, may be abundantly poured down upon our hearts by the influence of his most Holy Spirit. O God, be pleased to regulate our minds, and give us to feel more of thy mind and image in us. Let us be thine, Lord, let us be thine! We feel ourselves most miserable, when we have the management of ourselves, but shall feel ourselves most happy, when brought under the management of our God. O thou who canst manage millions at the same moment of time, and at the greatest intervals of distance, descend and take the management of our hearts. We plead thy pro-

mise, dear Lord; thy last words left with us poor sinners, before thou ascendedst up on high, "Lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the world." The world is not yet ended; we are still walking in its devious paths; lead us by the right hand of thy righteousness, and let us "lean upon our beloved." Keep us from stumbling in the celestial road, and grant that we may press on, singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. As we have but a little while in this world, may we live in the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, till such time as we shall come to be forever with the Lord. Be this day, we humbly beseech thee, with preachers for the people's sake, and be with the people for thy mercy and compassion's sake. Let all thy churches abound in spirituality and holiness. Pity those that are in darkness respecting these things, and may we all rejoice in "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" our Lord.

A PRAYER FOR THE GRACES OF THE SPIRIT.

O THOU, God of all grace, visit our souls with those delightful graces of thy Spirit, which will

in want, and always in danger, and there is not a moment in which we do not need to feel a solemn dependence upon thee. This day, O Lord, we celebrate one of the greatest mercies ever exhibited to our fallen and ruined race. Praised be the dear Redeemer, who appeared as the "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," "to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," sustaining, when he died upon the cross, all the agonies of the divine wrath and vengeance. But of what benefit will this glorious work of our Saviour be to those in whom its effects are not accomplished? We therefore pray that what our Lord procured, when he died in our stead, may be abundantly poured down upon our hearts by the influence of his most Holy Spirit. O God, be pleased to regulate our minds, and give us to feel more of thy mind and image in us. Let us be thine, Lord, let us be thine! We feel ourselves most miserable, when we have the management of ourselves, but shall feel ourselves most happy, when brought under the management of our God. O thou who canst manage millions at the same moment of time, and at the greatest intervals of distance, descend and take the management of our hearts. We plead thy pro-

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A PRAYER FOR THE GRACES OF THE SPIRIT.

O THOU, God of all grace, visit our souls with those delightful graces of thy Spirit, which will

create a heaven within us upon earth, and make us meet for the heaven which thou hast prepared for us in glory ! We want thy Spirit, that we may enjoy the grace of prayer ; we want thy Spirit, that we may enjoy the grace of love ; we want thy Spirit, that we may enjoy the grace of humility ; we want thy Spirit, that we may have grace to subdue all our vile and evil tempers. We need grace to mortify every lust. We pray that we may be enabled to come "boldly to the throne of grace, that we may find mercy and grace to help in every time of need." Let these supplications be heard and answered, for the sake of Him who hath given us "abundantly above all that we can ask and think."

A MINISTER'S EARNEST SUPPLICATION FOR THE SOULS
OF HIS FLOCK ASSEMBLED BEFORE HIM.

THOU art seated in glory, thou most glorious God ! Holy is God the Father ; Holy is God the Son ; Holy is God the Spirit. What are we ? Unholy in the sight of the infinite, triune Jehovah ! We would not come before thee in a presumptuous manner, for it is fit that we ap-

proach thee with self-abasement and self-abhorrence, and lie very low in the dust in thy sight. "We have sinned against heaven, and before thee," and are no longer worthy to be numbered among thy children. But, O Lord! what grace and compassion, to send thine only Son, thy well-beloved Son, as an ambassador of love to this world of ours; and to send out ministers under the glorious power of that glorious Redeemer, "to beseech people in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God?" O what a message is ours! Would to God it might be blessed, and that souls might feel the good of it. We feel our utter insufficiency and inability to attempt a work so very sacred and important. O let us not touch the sacred harp with unholy hands; but may we be prepared by the grace of God to preach concerning the grace of God, and be enabled so to speak that souls may be won to God. There are many before thee, O Lord, who have never been won, and we pray thee to grant thy winning grace and power. Thou hast grace and power enough to bring multitudes to thyself. Shall thy arm be shortened that it cannot save, and men's ears wax dull that they may not hear? O Lord, help us to bring ourselves near to thee by prayer. We

know that our prayers are unworthy, yet we are commanded to pray. O God, send thy blessing down with all thy power. We are assembled here to hear thy word, and we pray that we may hear it under the influence of thy Spirit. Lord, reveal thy power, which can effect wonders on the heart: that thereby much good may be done among the dead in trespasses and sins. When shall the gospel trumpet awaken such to live to thee? Ere the time comes when the last trump shall sound, may many dead sinners be roused by the voice of the gospel trumpet, and fly to wait on thee. Help me, O God, both in body and mind. The body needs it, but the mind much more. Lord, help both, and grant that thy blessing may be in the midst of us. There are some sick, weak, and distressed, who beg an interest in our prayers; be pleased to grant their request. There are some here present who have brought their children and others to hear. O disappoint them not. Let all ministers be made very much alive to thee. Quicken our spirits according to thy word, and do good to the souls of all. Accept thanksgivings on behalf of those who have been mercifully delivered in the time of childbirth, and where life is spared and life given, may the

offspring be brought up in the fear of the Lord. Look down in great mercy and grace upon those who are in affliction of any sort, and give them "a happy issue" out of all for thy name's sake. O Lord, I pray thee give me that which I shall feel to be profitable to my own soul, and make it useful to the souls of the people. According to the course of nature, thy poor creature is preaching some of his last sermons—God grant that they may be his most useful ones. Awake, awake, O arm of the Lord ! and let his glory be revealed. We sum up all these our supplications and prayers in our dear Saviour's name and words. *Our Father, &c.*

A PRAYER FOR HIMSELF AND FELLOW MINISTERS.

O LORD, my work is an important one. I feel myself totally unequal to it. Let me find my sufficiency in thee. Who can preach of divine things as becomes the importance of the subject? God forbid that we should use lightness in preaching of them. We should preach as from the heart, and to the heart. Let ministers of thy word act worthily, that men may know

what thou hast done in them, and that they may be living examples to their flocks. Let not thy church be corrupted by carnal men, but may they who bear the vessels of the Lord be holy, and live in love before thee, being adorned with all manner of holy conversation and godliness. May they preach those glorious truths, which by the power of thy Spirit, shall accomplish wonders on the souls of men.

PRAYER AGAINST SINFUL AND DISTURBING
THOUGHTS.

O LORD, may every thought be dumb that would keep us away from thy throne of grace, that we may lay ourselves open before thee, and receive out of that fulness which flows from thy bounteous hand. "The preparation of the heart," O Lord, "is from thee." From thee alone flows the sweet spirit of supplication and prayer. It is by thee alone that our minds can be kept in a praying frame. O that we may be taught of God how to deal with God, that God himself may deal with us. We are in a very troublesome world, and we have hearts prone

to ten thousand evils, while millions of temptations from without are always stirring up those evils that are within. O how much we need the active operation of our almighty God to keep us in a holy frame. Some may imagine that they can perform their devotions easily ; but Lord help us to remember our depraved state, and what solemn work it is to get near to thee in prayer. May we be praying within ourselves, till we are delivered from that evil state. O thou keeper and director of all minds, we desire thee to keep our minds. Take bad thoughts away, and give us good ones in their place. Impertinent thoughts often intrude when we would have nothing to interrupt between us and thee. Be thou the keeper of our immortal souls, and may our hearts be open to receive that which is good.

PRAYER ON THE LAST EVENING OF THE YEAR,

DEC. 31, 1826.

MAY we consider before whom we now stand, and to whom we address our supplications. Whilst the lips of the minister utter the words of prayer, how many are there in this congrega-

tion, who have none of the spirit of real prayer; who will hear prayer against sin, and still have no inclination, no strong desire to reform. Whilst we address a God of holiness, thousands are indifferent and cannot pray, through the sad corruption of their degenerate minds. How are sinners to be delivered from their sins, who from the vile appetites of their nature choose still to live in them? Lord have mercy upon us. Give us to feel our need of prayer. We are just come to the conclusion of another year; may the Lord grant that those who during its course have lived a life of sin, may at the commencement of a new year, begin a life of righteousness and devotedness to God. May we not be spared merely to increase our eternal damnation; may we not have more misspent time to answer for in eternity. O God, as time is rolling on at a most solemn rate, and is certain in its operations, grant that in time we may be preparing for eternity. Give to those before thee power to obey that solemn admonition, "prepare to meet your God." Enable the preacher rightly to divide the word of truth. But Lord what does this alone avail! The minister may use all fidelity to the souls of his hearers, while they only increase their con-

demnation thereby ! With their ears they will hear the word, and yet be content to add sin to sin, unless the Lord prevent. O speak, and let this be accomplished—let all alarm be created in dead sinners' hearts. O Lord we lament the unfeeling state of mankind—that the conscience is hardened, that it is both deaf and dumb, neither ready to speak for God, nor to hear from God. May sleeping consciences be awakened, and everlasting good be the result. Give thine old servant strength to perform his duty. He entreats thy pardon, that throughout the past year, he has served thee with so little devotedness. Let all the people be now in a solemn frame before thee ; may we all be concerned that we have not been more dedicated to thee. O Lord help us to employ time properly for eternity. May the word of life be spoken as with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. We pray for all preachers of thy word, and for their abundant admission among those who are dead in trespasses and sin." May the kingdom of God, which is "righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," gloriously descend upon the hearts of thousands. Hear us while we address thee as *Our Father, &c.*

A PRAYER AGAINST REBELLION OF THE HEART.

O LORD, help us to contend with the worst enemy we have—a wicked and corrupt heart, which tempts us to be daring rebels against a God of infinite majesty, and of power to sweep us away with “the besom of destruction,” while there is none to help. Instead of madly dashing against the thick bosses of thy buckler; instead of thinking to shake thy eternal throne by our rebellion, may we be ashamed of ourselves before thee. May we be brought down to the dust of humble submission, and be led to seek for grace and mercy in the riches of thy compassion and love, that are still treasured up for us. How many thousands are now in the way to ruin through their own neglect and thoughtlessness! Bless us, O God, with penitent hearts, that we may give glory to thy name, and that we may be in earnest to escape from the wrath to come. O Lord, our time here below is short; and how awful will it be to stand before the judgment-seat of an incensed God! We would seek the mercy thou canst manifest and hast manifested in Christ. May we with humility ask for “redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of our sins, accord-

ing to the riches of his grace ;” and may we find that life and salvation which eternal love and mercy have purchased on our behalf.

A PRAYER FOR THE UNIVERSAL SPREAD OF THE
GOSPEL.

LORD, have mercy upon the world for the Saviour's sake, and be pleased to send down thy divine Spirit from above, that the sons and daughters of rebellion may be made to dread the consequences of their own ways, and to fly to the arms of Him who “saves to the uttermost” all that are enabled to come to thee to be saved through him. O God, be pleased to give an edge to thy word, that it may come with power to the heart. Make the hardened strong heart to give way, and let us know that thou canst bless us with feeling and obedient hearts, whereby we are enabled to give ourselves up to thee. No words of ours can be of any avail : we only look unto the Lord to make his word the “power of God unto salvation” to the soul, and we pray for the manifestation of that power. All thy ministers need to be divinely aided by thee. It is not in us to perform thy work well without thyself--thou alone canst give force to the truth,

and make dead sinners to hear the voice of the Son of God that they may live. O when will our God break forth on the right hand and on the left, and bring in sinners far and wide? Thy bright sun arises with peculiar grandeur from the eastern world, bringing on in due course the delightful season we rejoice to see; Lord, send the sun of righteousness to shine upon our hearts, and let beams of light and life be communicated to sinners who are living "in darkness and the shadow of death." Drive ignorance from the mind, and hardness from the heart, and be pleased to prevent the dreadful consequences of unbelief from sealing us up in that miserable state, wherein we all are by nature. Thy grace can perform wonders; we pray that those wonders may take place. May we feel that thou art with us of a truth. "Make bare thine arm," and reveal thine almighty power. Thou alone canst raise up ministers well suited to thy work, and we beseech thee to speak that this may be done. Glorify thine own name in letting thy might be universally revealed. May we see the glorious tidings of salvation reaching many hearts, and bringing multitudes to thyself. These our supplications and prayers we offer in our Redeemer's name, addressing thee as *Our Father, &c.*

PRAYER ON SUNDAY MORNING, NOV. 23, 1828.

MAY our hearts be prepared for a very solemn act, that of calling on the name of our infinitely holy God. None but presumptuous fools could come into thy presence rashly and inconsiderately. It becomes us to blush with shame before thee that we are such sinners in thy sight. We lament the inward depravity of our hearts, but we bless thee if it is not permitted to prevail against us in outward actions. O grant that as long as we feel our sinfulness, we may bewail it; may we hate what thou hatest, the wickedness of the heart. While there remains such an intermixture in us that we are wonders to ourselves, thanks be to thee that by grace we are what we are. But we desire to rise into a higher region, to "sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus!" to be more heavenly-minded, and spiritually-minded. We want more of thee in ourselves, in reading thy word, in attending thy house, and more of thy Spirit to conduct us in a safe and honourable manner through this world's wilderness. O remember us for good. O my God, help *me*. Look upon thy poor aged servant, who feels his inability more than ever. While my recollection begins to fail, while bodily

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strength diminishes, forget me not, O God, in my old age, but enable me to preach thy word with spirituality and power to the heart. Suggest, O suggest fresh matter to my mind, and let the people come with holy expectation that the Lord will rain down righteousness upon them, and bless them with sweet visits from above. While thine outward sun shines brightly upon our bodies even in the wintry day, so may the sun of righteousness shine powerfully into all our minds, that darkness may be made light before it. May vivifying illumination from on high direct us how to live to thy glory, and unto thee shall be all the praise through the countless ages of eternity. May we all live as before the living God, and die unto sin. May we rather die than decline in the divine life. The nearer we approach to heaven, the more prepared may we be for it, and as the time of our departure from earth draws nigh, deliver us, O Lord, from an earthly mind. Help each of us to shake it off with care, and finely say, "O that I had wings like a dove, then would I fly away and be at rest." Give us these wings, for thy mercy's sake.

AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF OUR FORFEITURE OF GOD'S
MERCIES.

LORD, what is prayer but begging? Should beggars be proud; beggars that have lost every thing by their own depravity and corruption, and who have rendered themselves unworthy of the restoration of the least of thy mercies! O Lord, the food that is before us is forfeited. How many are under thy curse, "cursed in their basket, and cursed in their store." How do they lead lives of luxury, and yet live perpetually under the curse of God! O may we have a better portion. May we be numbered with those who have the fear of God, which alone can create in us an abhorrence of that which is evil, and a desire for those things that are essentially good.

A PRAYER FOR PROOFS OF ANSWERS TO PRAYER.

INFINITELY holy God, grant that we may pray in the Holy Ghost, and feel that the Holy Ghost creates in us those holy desires which a Holy God will answer. O Lord, grant that we may have a proof, a full proof, that our prayers

are heard by their being answered. If we pray against sin, the Lord help us to prevail against it. If we pray against vile tempers, O Lord, subdue them, and instil into us the feelings of love. May we pray against all the evils which abound in the heart, and may we feel that we do not pray in vain, because we abhor them. Lord, what avail our prayers, if we are not the better for them? O let us be the better for our devotions. May we have a good sign that our prayers are heard by our hearts being purified thereby. May we never be contented with mere lip service, but always look up for an answer. These supplications we humbly prefer in our dear Saviour's name.

A CONFESSION OF OUR NEED OF MERCY.

WE bless thee, O God, that we poor miserable sinners are permitted to approach a throne of grace, that we may "obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." How could we dare to come upon any other plea but that of mercy!

Mercy, good Lord, mercy we ask,
This is the total sum;
For mercy, Lord, is all our plea;
O let thy mercy come.

O that we may feel our need of mercy, and behold thee seated upon thy mercy-seat, to receive the petitions of poor sinners who are humbled by thy grace, and seek thy face for pardon with humble and contrite hearts. Thanks be to God for thy throne of grace, that we may come boldly to the same, and yet when we come boldly, may our holy boldness be tempered with repentant sorrow and contrite self-abhorrence, that we are still so vile. God be praised for the sceptre held in the Saviour's hand, a sceptre of divine compassion extended to us poor miserable sinners, that we may be pardoned and "accepted in the beloved."

A PRAYER AFTER THE RELIGIOUS MEETINGS IN
LONDON.

O LORD, we have been passing the last week in attempting to propagate and plant the truths of the gospel far and wide. Lord, let it be spread more and more. Grant that we may not go about trying to heal others at a distance, and continue to be unhealed, and corrupt at home. Send out thy light and thy truth with universal sway; and may the time draw near, when the "dead shall hear the voice of the Son

of God, and live." Honour our nation by giving it to be a nation holier than ever. Keep thy church at all times, and do thine own will, and let us be made "thy willing people in the day of thy power." In the midst of weakness may thy poor creature enjoy a share of strength, and whilst bodily strength decreases and days seem soon about to cease, Lord prepare all of us both young and old to meet our God. How many of thy zealous servants hast thou of late taken to thyself; still we remain on this side Jordan. O grant that when we come to those cold waters we may enter them with confidence in thee, and behold the dear Redeemer standing on the other side the flood, to welcome us in peace. We pray for ministers of the gospel all the world over. We pray for our king, and the country to which we belong, and we beseech thee to bless us all for God our Saviour's sake. Amen.

A PRAYER AGAINST INDIFFERENCE.

O God make us sensible what sinners we are, and what a mercy it is that ever salvation should be extended to such sinners. We are ashamed of ourselves. Our very repentance proves the

depravity of our hearts. We grieve so little for our crimes—great as they are, we are but little concerned at a state so completely evil. Have mercy upon us, O Lord, and save us from dying under the lethargy of indifference. O God, give us to use our powers to strive for the salvation of our souls; yea, may we “strive to enter in at the strait gate”—to “fight the good fight of faith,” and patiently to “run the race set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.”

A PRAYER TO BE KEPT FROM FALLING.

O LORD, we have enough to do, to lament over our short comings. O save us from having to lament over dreadful falls. Lord, thy promise is that thou wilt keep the feet of thy saints. O keep our feet, we pray thee, and enable us to pass through the world in a safe and honourable manner, so as never to disgrace thy sacred cause. O Lord, take care of us and keep us.

A PRAYER FOR A LOVE OF THE DIVINE LAW.

O LORD, inwardly graft in our hearts a delight in thy holy law:—yea, Lord, we beseech thee,

send New Testament power and grace to write thy law upon the very tables of our hearts and affections. May we never have them out of our memories and minds. Wherever we go, Lord, grant that a spirit of obedience may go with us, and that we may feel a sacred gratification in keeping those commandments in which there is so very great and present a reward.

A PRAYER AGAINST SINFUL DESIRES.

O LORD our God, save us from evil wants, and fill us with good wants. Lord, how awfully does the world long for that which will be their destruction if they receive it. O may we each be enabled to say, "Thou, O God, art the thing that I long for." Take away all base and vile longings from our hearts; yea, give us, we beseech thee, hearts that will resist them with detestation and abhorrence. O that we may be of the number of those who are "pure in heart."

A CHRISTMAS-DAY PRAYER.

O THAT we may realize the birth of our Saviour by being ourselves born again. We ask for a testimony of thy birth by feeling our new birth.

O that we may be "regenerate and born again," and daily (for we need it daily) "be renewed by thy Holy Spirit." *Renewed!* blessed be God, the grace of Christ is ever new in the gospel. O help us to pray for its renewal upon our minds. Be with us at thy table, we pray thee. Though the bodily pulse is weak, may the pulse of the heart be strong; and "when heart and flesh fail, may God be the strength of our hearts and portion for evermore."

A PRAYER ON NEW-YEAR'S DAY, 1832.

WHAT a solemn idea is the progression of time! Lord, we are entered, according to our own calculation, upon a new period of time. Another year is turned round, and is lost in the abyss of eternity. Though the thought of eternity is higher than we can reach, yet still we shall attain its end by having within us those infinitely precious souls that are to have an eternal existence with God in everlasting glory. O that God would be with us in our meditations on this solemn day. Lord, let every event have a good effect upon our minds to lead us to thyself. O my God, grant that I may be more

useful to souls than ever I have been. Just about to bid an adieu to this world, prepare my heart, O Lord, for the world to come, and then shall I be fit to yield up my ministry, and to say, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

A PRAYER UNDER THE INFIRMITIES OF OLD AGE.

LORD have mercy upon a poor aged pilgrim, that finds his memory failing, his eyesight growing dim, his faculties going downwards. Lord, grant to the last moment of my life, if every thing else leaves me, spirituality may never leave me, and as I get nearer to the grave, may I find myself drawing nearer to heaven. Lord, lead us all out of our wretched selves to thyself, that Christ may be our all in all.

HIS PRAYER BEFORE HIS LAST SERMON,
MARCH 31, 1633.

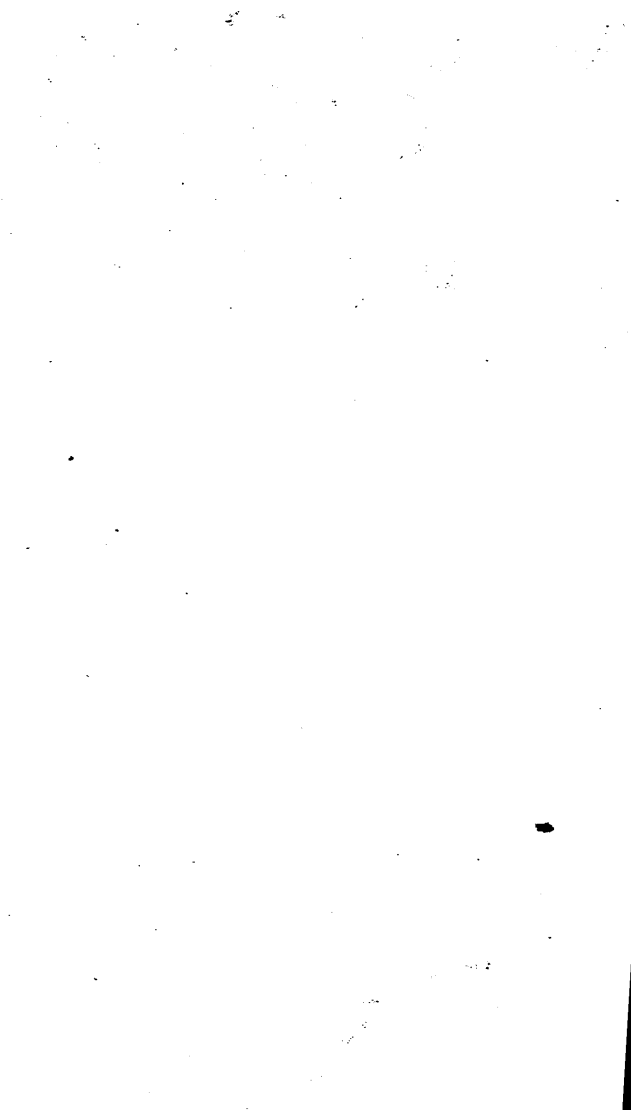
LORD, we are nothing, we can do nothing ! Thou must do all, or else we shall find that we meet in vain in thy house. But hast not thou promised to be with us always, and wilt thou

forget thy promise? Forgetfulness never can affect the mind of Him whose power and wisdom are infinite! Though we deserve to be put out of thy sight, yet thou magnifiest thy great mercy towards such poor unworthy creatures as we are. Here are the people; here is thy precious word before our eyes; but without thy blessing, O Lord, we assemble in vain. The instrument feels himself very weak, but give him strength for thy mercy's sake. Grant, we beseech thee, that the word spoken to the ear may come with a divine influence to the heart, and do its wonders in our minds, so that we may be brought to thyself, and agonize* and cry for those eternal and glorious riches that are treasured up in the Lord Jesus Christ. O that thy light may drive away our ignorance, and that thy life may quicken us from that dead frame of mind which naturally belongs to us all. Come, Lord, and let every heart breathe out a fervent prayer, that many souls may be inspired with holy zeal and prove thy power. O God, let sin be rooted out of our hearts. Let our petitions before thee be answered according to the feelings of thy grace, and according to the riches of thy mercy in the Lord Jesus

* A favourite word of Mr. Hill's, from the Greek *ἀγωνίζομαι*.

Christ. Send out thy blessed light to foreign lands. How many lands are there, that are lands of darkness ! When will the Lord say to each of them, "arise and shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee?" Be pleased to make some thankful who have received mercies at thy hand in the time of nature's sorrow, and from one who has been near to death, but is still preserved. May their families be preserved with them. Lord, keep them all. Make us grateful for thy goodness, and let us remember that we are only spared to live to thy glory and praise. Hear us and answer us in these our petitions. Thanks be to God for an interceding Christ ; thanks be to God, that while we could not intercede for ourselves, "he ever liveth," and will ever live "to make intercession for us," for his church, which "he has purchased with his own blood," till he brings it eternally to himself. These our supplications and prayers, together with our praises for all thy mercies, we sum up in our Lord's own words, addresssing thee as *Our Father, &c.*

THE END.



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